FOREWORD

GASTROENTEROLOGY embraces many different fields and interests. Indeed it may claim to be the core of general medicine and general surgery as these terms are understood today. Though no one can doubt that gastroenterology demands special application for the better understanding of its manifold problems, it is not in itself a specialty. It is an amalgam of many. In diagnosis, in treatment, and in investigation, it requires the cooperation of a team of workers, who will include at various times, and in different combinations, the clinician, whether physician or surgeon, the radiologist, the biochemist, the haematologist, the bacteriologist, the morbid anatomist, the nutrition expert, the physiologist, and the psychiatrist.

As a result of new and improved methods, the perfecting of surgical techniques, and field work into social problems, much headway has been made in the understanding and management of such conditions as dyspepsia not originating in ulcers, Crohn's disease, and ulcerative colitis, though the cause and treatment of peptic ulcer remain a major challenge. Much light has been shed on the physiology and histopathology of the liver and pancreas, and on the haemodynamics of portal hypertension; on the relation between blood groups and gastric disorders, and between alimentary disorders and the blood; on the metabolism of fats; on the motility of the oesophagus, and the mechanism of the cardia.

Malignant disease still casts its dark shadow, however, particularly in respect of cancer of the stomach, for which surgery alone can hope, at present, to bring relief. Despite signal advances of recent years in operative technique and some progress in diagnostic measures, the prospect for the sufferer remains bleak. Cancer of the mucus-secreting epithelium of the gastrointestinal tract presents such special difficulties to the cancer research worker that it is in danger of being neglected in favour of the more exciting and accommodating hormone-dependent growths, and the sarcomas, whose readier growth *in vitro* endear them to the laboratory worker.

It is to assist the further elucidation of these many and varied problems by providing a vehicle for the expression and interchange of ideas and for making easily and quickly available knowledge from all sources—bedside, laboratory, experiment—that this new journal, *Gut*, is dedicated. Its success depends upon the readiness of all who devote themselves to problems immediately or more remotely concerned with the study of gastroenterology to share their knowledge freely with their colleagues through the medium of its pages. It is hoped that the usefulness of the journal will not, however, be confined to those whose sole interest lies in one of the many different facets of gastroenterology, but to all medical men, whether they be in hospital or general practice, who are responsible for the welfare of patients.

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