At the inaugural meeting of the Editorial Committee of *Gut* on 15 October 1959, it was agreed that the first number should include a Foreword written by the Editor, Mr Harold Edwards, but that ‘subsequent issues contain no editorial because this feature was a difficult one to maintain’. In this issue, however, we have decided to include an Editorial because this is the first issue of *Gut* to appear since its inception without the active participation of Sir Francis Avery Jones. Sir Francis was intimately involved in the foundation of the journal in 1960 and then became the first Editorial Secretary, a position comparable with that of the Editor today. After five years he became Editor, holding that office until 1970. Sir Francis was also involved in christening the journal with its short and effective Anglo-Saxon name. Since 1968, he has edited the Notes and Activities section of *Gut*, and he has recently introduced and edited the Book Reviews. He has therefore been associated with the journal for 18 years, a period during which his visits to the editorial office have brought pleasure and delight to all those who have had the privilege of working with him. It has also been a period of almost logarithmic growth of gastroenterology. In 1960, the first issue of *Gut* recorded the proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the British Society of Gastroenterology in Belfast the previous autumn. The most momentous decision taken was to increase the number of members of the Society from 65 to 100. The
total number of papers presented was 20 and they were recorded in that gentlemanly Victorian style so beloved of the Quarterly Journal of Medicine when reporting the leisurely proceedings of the Association of Physicians. Eighteen years later, as Sir Francis recorded in his report of the highly successful meeting of the Society in York last year, there were over 850 registrants and reference to the published abstracts shows that nearly 200 papers were presented. In the first year of its publication in 1960, Gut at once achieved a circulation of 1024 and by the time Sir Francis handed on the Editorial Chair to Professor Sheila Sherlock in 1970, the circulation figure had risen to 3519. At the last count it was over 5500. This remarkable achievement owes everything to the drive, energy, and foresight of Sir Francis Avery Jones. The secret of his success was to ensure that Gut should be primarily a journal of interest to practising gastroenterologists as well as providing a forum for those involved in the complexities of gastrointestinal and hepatic research in either the clinic or the basic science laboratory. Perhaps his philosophy is summarised by the dry comment that he made in reply to an editorial colleague who asked him why Gut had been so successful. ‘When I see the word dog or rat in the title’, he replied, ‘I cross it out’. He has through many years encouraged and supported with his advice many gastroenterologists in this country, in Europe and throughout the world. His presence at the Editorial Office, his whimsical sense of humour, and his friendship will be missed by all involved in the editing of Gut, his journal. Gastroenterologists in this country will continue to enjoy his often silent but expressive presence at their Annual Meeting. A far wider circle of readers of Gut the world over will wish ‘Avery’ well.

He is to be succeeded as Editor of the Notes, Activities and Book Reviews section, by his colleague Dr George Misiewicz, Central Middlesex Hospital, Park Royal, London, to whom items for inclusion should be directed at the Gut editorial office at BMA House.