Review editor's note

Not so long ago, it was observed that if the size of medical textbooks continued to increase at its present rate, like dinosaurs they would become victims of their own bulk: they would be too heavy to lift. **Gut**, too, has been growing in size – initially in depth and, more recently, in length and breadth as well. This reflects the increasing quality and quantity of papers submitted, commensurate with the increasing quality and quantity of gastrointestinal research. There is no worry, as yet, of our journal sharing the same fate as the dinosaur. Nevertheless, there is a widely held view that over the years a growing proportion of **Gut** has become less accessible to its readership. This is, perhaps, a natural result of the sophistification and specialisation of science. There are few of our readers who are au fait in equal measure with stimulus-secretion coupling, cell-cycle kinetics, T cell receptor interaction, anal sphincter physiology, and the psychodynamics of the irritable bowel.

Clearly, **Gut** will always remain faithful to its aim of publishing high quality contributions in scientific gastroenterology but the editorial board feels it may be timely and appropriate to include, on a regular basis, some less weighty material, which might reflect the issues in what is sometimes termed ‘the real world’ – here defined as the world in which we spend our time devoted to the art and craft rather than the science of gastroenterology. Initially, we have sought contributions in two areas.

Firstly, in keeping with our translation into an international journal, we will be inviting distinguished members of our international advisory board to comment in ‘International Gastroenterology’ on issues of importance in their own countries. Secondly, mindful of Towne’s dictum that those who do not learn the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them, we shall invite members of our parent society to share with us the benefits of their experience in ‘Personal Viewpoint’. In the midst of the endoscopic revolution, we would do well to remember that the retrospecoscope is a most powerful instrument.

We would be happy to consider publication of unsolicited contributions in either of these formats, and hope that this new section of the journal will provide some reader friendly relief on those occasions when the sheer volume of science seems somewhat indigestible.

IAN FORGACS