

Editorial – The Consequences of Success

Since March 1987 there has been a remarkable and sustained increase in the number of manuscripts submitted for publication to the *British Journal of Pharmacology*. For example, in the four months up to February 1987 there were 172 submissions compared to the four months leading up to February 1988 when there were 267 submissions, a rise of 55%.

We believe that a number of factors have led to this increase in submission rate, amongst which must be (a) the rapid publication time we have been able to maintain, (b) the helpful and constructive reports of Editors and Referees, (c) the high position of the Journal in SCI Citation Reports (6th out of 119 journals and second among primary source periodicals), (d) the removal of the need for alphabetical author listing, (e) the rising scientific quality and importance of published papers and (f) the technical quality of the Journal.

Although the increase is a most welcome indication of the success of the Journal it brings with it some important and difficult consequences. These include a very greatly increased workload for our already hard-pressed Editors, Press Editor, Editorial Office staff and Secretary and also a considerable rise in costs as volumes increase in size.

With the expansion of the Editorial Board and planned increases in facilities in the Editorial Office, we expect to be able to deal with the work load and to maintain our current high standards. However, too rapid an increase in the size of the Journal would certainly result in sharp rises in subscription rates and we are anxious to avoid this, especially at a time when academic institutions are hard-pressed. We have rejected solutions based on the introduction of page or handling charges and we do not intend to

raise, artificially, the proportion of manuscripts rejected.

This leaves us with only one serious alternative which is to obtain a reduction in the length of individual papers while still maintaining their scientific content. If this can be achieved we believe it will then allow the Journal to grow at a planned and modest rate over the coming years.

We, therefore, ask authors to cooperate in keeping their manuscripts as short as they reasonably can. An effective way is to reduce the Discussion and the number of figures to a minimum and to avoid repetition of information that has already been published. A quick glance through recent issues of the Journal will show that quite a number of papers of outstanding novelty and originality have appeared and that a majority of these fall well below the average length. From now on editors will be more vigilant than usual in suggesting ways of shortening manuscripts but much time and trouble is saved if authors bear brevity in mind right from the start. I do hope you will do all you can to help in this way so that we can publish more of your papers and so enlarge, even further, the reputation of the Journal.

Finally, authors are urged to reduce our costs and work-load by preparing their texts and illustrations in accordance with Instructions to Authors. These can be found in a shortened version on the inside back cover of the Journal. For full details, authors should consult Instructions to Authors, *Br. J. Pharmacol.*, 1984, 81, 415–422.

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Chairman, Editorial Board of
Br. J. Pharmacol.
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