PREFACE

This year Florence provided a memorable setting for the 21st Congress of the European Dialysis and Transplant Association—European Renal Association. The weather could have been better and many of us were unaware that the monsoons spread as far as Tuscany. This did not dampen our spirits and the Congress was a lively exchange of clinical and scientific information. This year the colour of the Proceedings, Chianti red, has been chosen to represent the social programme, so well arranged by the organising committee.

The Congress was bigger this year with the Registry reports, nine guest lectures, one symposium, 66 free communications and 73 poster presentations. The Proceedings has, therefore, increased in size and this has provided a great increase in workload to achieve publication within such a tight schedule. We are grateful to the majority of authors who provided their manuscripts by the deadline, 115 of the 139 accepted papers were received by the deadline date. It is interesting to note that those who were late in submitting manuscripts last year were the same this year, an observation which has been made previously. Some communications have not been included in the Proceedings, one because the manuscript did not arrive in time, one because it had been accepted for publication elsewhere and one because, in spite of the manuscript being received in good time, it was not presented at the Congress. This year only a few authors have included more than 10 references but in such cases these have been deleted in order to be fair to those authors who adhered to the editorial instructions.

In a number of free communications it will be noted that the text does not fully record the discussion comments. The reason for this was considerable technical problems with recording and some of our tapes have proved impossible to transcribe. In some instances, for completeness, we have used the question sheets and asked the author for his replies. This is not entirely satisfactory but it is the best compromise in the situation. Again this year we have attempted to reference the discussion comments. We hope we have found the appropriate reference and again have been surprised to be unable to find some, which we were sure would be easily available, in spite of rigorous searching. The general view seems to be that the discussion adds little to the value of the Proceedings and, therefore, thought must be given to dropping this, an action which would be very cost saving and which would reduce significantly the editorial workload.

It is a pleasure to record our thanks to Professor Vincenzo Cambi, and Dr Fabbio Bono and their organising committee for all the help given to the editorial staff before and during the Congress. The facilities provided were excellent and the local organising committee worked hard throughout the meeting. The editorial office has again been organised by Mrs Gillian Howard and the speedy publication of this volume is due in considerable part to her efforts. Mrs Betty Dickens and Miss Claire Vinycomb provided secretarial help.
in typing the discussion sessions. This year the major part of the proof-reading has been undertaken by Iain Davison and we are grateful to his eagle-eyes in correcting the proofs. As previously the rapid publication of this volume is due to the co-ordinated efforts of many people but we are especially indebted to Mrs Betty Dickens of the Medical Conference Unit of Pitman Publishing for publishing this work with such rapidity.

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