

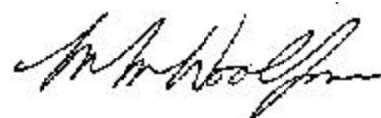
FOREWORD

In a world beset by so many problems it is reassuring to be a crystallographer. The crystallographic community is above all an international one, uniting as colleagues scientists from the East and the West, from the developed and the developing world without regard for race, colour or creed. So it should be and long may it so remain.

The central pillars in this collective identity are a common interest, our field of science, and a common recognition of excellence no matter what its source, free of any taint of chauvinism. Perhaps in science the Olympic ideal remains; sadly, in sport, it has long since been lost.

One division which does remain, and which is not of our making, is that of language. There is no doubt that, for reasons of history and economic development, Western European languages are dominant in the field of science communication, with English being more used than any other language. Because of their common structures speakers of such languages as French, German, Italian, English and Spanish can learn each other's tongue with comparative ease and, once the Cyrillic script is mastered, even the Russian language presents few problems. The exceptions, for those brought up in the European tradition, are those languages based on Chinese characters where the basis and structure are completely unfamiliar. Few of us ever master Chinese or Japanese and we depend on the hard work and good will of our Asian colleagues in learning our language for communication to be established.

The Rigaku Journal has existed for some time presenting papers in Japanese. With the establishment by Rigaku of its European base in Dusseldorf we welcome an English-based version of the journal. If it upholds the standards associated with the name of Rigaku, then its issues will be eagerly awaited by its readership.



Michael M. Woolfson

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University of York

Heslington, York, YO1 5DD