

CHANGE IN EDITORSHIP

With this number, the Editorial Board and Cambridge University Press introduce Dr R. J. Summerfield, who will succeed Professor J. P. Hudson as Editor of *Experimental Agriculture* during 1982.

In nearly half a century, since April 1933, this journal and its predecessor, the *Empire Journal of Experimental Agriculture*, have had only four Editors. Dr E. H. Tripp established the journal and served as Editor for 20 years, up to July 1953 (Vol. 21, no. 83) when he was succeeded briefly by Dr H. L. Richardson. The name of H. J. Page appeared in the April 1955 issue (Vol. 23, no. 90) and he continued as Editor for nearly ten years. Professor J. P. Hudson, who became the next Editor from April 1964 (Vol. 32, no. 126), has served the journal with outstanding distinction and success for 18 years. The Editorial Board, and the authors and readers of the eight hundred papers he has edited, all owe him a very considerable debt of thanks.

Like his three immediate predecessors, Dr Summerfield has ascended the ladder of promotion from humble reader to author, and now to editor. His initial professional training as a botanist at Nottingham University was in the field of physiological ecology, than which there can be few better introductions to agronomy. In 1971 he joined the staff of the Plant Environment Laboratory of the University of Reading as a post-doctoral fellow. In 1973 he took charge of running this advanced and sophisticated complex of facilities, and has since been largely responsible for the evolution of its research programme. There can be few controlled-environment installations in the world so efficiently run, and so productive scientifically, as the PEL at Reading.

Throughout the last ten years Dr Summerfield has been continuously concerned with the work of the Laboratory on the description and analysis of diversity in the way tropical grain legumes are adapted to the environment, and on associated questions in plant nutrition and symbiotic dinitrogen fixation. This work, funded by the Overseas Development Administration, has throughout been closely linked with complementary studies in the field at one or more of the International Agricultural Research Centres - first with IITA (on cowpeas and soyabbeans) and later with ICRISAT and ICARDA (on chickpeas, lentils and faba beans). These collaborative programmes have regularly taken Dr Summerfield overseas, particularly into the tropics; and a steady stream of research students and visitors from overseas flows to the Laboratory. Dr Summerfield has recently returned to Britain after a productive sabbatical year at Washington State University where he helped to set up a research programme on the ecophysiology of the lentil crop and joined in the publication of a number of significant reviews and research papers.

An outstanding feature of the work of PEL has been the prompt and efficient dissemination of the results. Since 1974 84 papers have been published,

12 of them in this journal, and Dr Summerfield has given about sixty invited lectures or seminars. He was closely associated with the planning of the 'agronomic' week of the International Legume Conference held at Kew in August 1978, and as senior editor was primarily responsible for the prompt publication, in early 1980, of *Advances in Legume Science*, which contains 58 papers presented during the agronomic sessions.

All these activities have brought the PEL and Dr Summerfield a substantial reputation in the application of plant science in general, and of plant physiology in particular, to practical problems of agronomy and plant breeding, particularly in the tropics. Taken together with his record as an author and editor, they amply qualify our new Editor for the responsibilities to *Experimental Agriculture* which he has now accepted.