Editorial

Reaching 100 years old is a reason to celebrate and the Journal of Agricultural Science, Cambridge, reaches that milestone this year. The opening Editorial in the first issue in 1905 justifies launching the Journal. It notes that in 1905, in Great Britain, there were about 24 Agricultural Colleges, most with an experimental farm and laboratory facilities. In addition many individuals also undertook agricultural research overseas. Although much of the scientific work was published in the Reports of the Agricultural Colleges, these tended to have a local distribution, and to be written in a non-technical way. Thus the promoters of the Journal of Agricultural Science, Cambridge, had decided that the time was right for the issue of a journal devoted wholly to scientific papers on agricultural subjects. In defining the remit of the journal the scope was to be wide including biological or physical subjects, provided the question bore on agriculture. The reports were required to be of original work. The Editorial stated that reports of ‘demonstration plots, or manurial and variety tests of an experimental nature’ were required to present times. The first paper was on wheat breeding. Others dealt with nitrogen, legumes and manure, the chemical composition of food crops and forages, plant and animal diseases, soil analysis, inheritance of characters in plants and animals. A paper with a strong resonance with today’s pre-occupations in European agriculture was ‘The amount and composition of drainage through unmanured and uncropped land, Barnfield, Rothamsted’.

And what of the Journal in 2105? There will still be farming, and farmers and policy makers needing answers to questions. The results will still need to be disseminated. So we believe the Journal will still be needed. Its high standing in its subject community gives it a head start in survival. That is not to say the Journal will look the same. Contributors will have noted that in August 2004 we moved to web-based submission via Manuscript Central (go to the website at http://jagricsci.manuscriptcentral.com). The whole scientific publishing industry is discussing modes of publication (paper v. electronic) and who should pay. These discussions do not threaten the Journal. Our survival depends on a continuing supply of good quality papers on agricultural science, as defined in the original issue. For that we are dependent on our readers and on the support which agricultural scientific research receives.

In this centenary year we believe it is entirely appropriate to consider what has been achieved over the last 100 years. Accordingly the issues in this Centenary Year will contain a set of Centenary Reviews in which particular topics are reviewed, progress is estimated and future prospects are considered. We hope you will enjoy reading them.

THE JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE, VOLUME 1, 1905–6

Contents

BIFFEN, R. H.
Mendel’s Laws of inheritance and wheat breeding.

HOWARD, A.
The influence of pollination on the development of the hop.

GOLDING, J.
The importance of the removal of the products of growth in the assimilation of nitrogen by the organisms of the root nodule of leguminous plants.

HALL, A. D.
The analysis of the soil by means of the plant.
COLLINS, S. H.
Variation in the chemical composition of the swede.

DYER, B.
Town stable manure: its chemical composition and the changes it undergoes on keeping.

WOOD, T. B. & BERRY, R. A.
Soil analysis as a guide to the manurial treatment of poor pastures.

MIDDLETON, T. H.
The improvement of poor pastures.

CROWOTHER, C.
Variation in the composition of cows’ milk.

WOOD, T. B. & BERRY, R. A.
Variation in the chemical composition of mangels.

DYMOND, T. S., HUGHES, F. & JUPE, C. W. C.
The influence of sulphates as manure upon the yield and feeding value of crops.

CAVE, T. W.
“Black-quarter” in sheep.

HALL, A. D.
On the accumulation of fertility by land allowed to run wild.

BIFFEN, R. H.
The inheritance of sterility in the barleys.

HALL, A. D.
Variation in composition of the swede.

RUSSELL, E. J.
The recent work of the American Soil Bureau.

ASHBY, S. F.
A contribution to the study of factors affecting the quality and composition of potatoes.

ASHBY, S. F.
Note on the fate of calcium cyanamide in the soil.

BUTLER, E. J.
The bearing of Mendelism on the susceptibility of wheat to rust.

WOOD, T. B.
Note on the inheritance of horns and face colour in sheep.

WOOD, T. B.
Note on “Bericht über die Arbeiten der Internationalen Kommission für die Analyse der Kunstdünger und Füttermittel des V. Internationalen Kongresses für Angewandte Chemie zu Berlin 1903”.

COLLINS, S. H.
Variation in chemical composition of the swede.

MILLER, N. H. J.
The amount and composition of the drainage through unmanured and uncropped land, Barnfield, Rothamsted.

WHEELER, E. G.
British ticks.

DIXON, J. K. S.
Citrate solubility of phosphoric acid in fertilizers.

RUSSELL, E. J. & SMITH, N.
On the question whether nitrates or nitrites are produced by non-bacterial processes in the soil.

LEAKE, H. M.
Some preliminary notes on the physical properties of the soils of the Ganges Valley, more especially in their relation to soil moisture.