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Editorial.

THE REVIEW AS A QUARTERLY.

The current issue of the "Review" probably marks its last release as a monthly periodical. Commencing March, 1949, it will be issued quarterly, but without change in its title, general purpose or composition, except for minor alterations in arrangement and some increase in size. The advantages foreseen are a greater scope for the adequate preparation and presentation of material and a reduction of editorial and publishing difficulties, which are not inconsiderable at the present time. The change in publication policy will now bring the "Review" into line with most other scientific and reviewing periodicals of a broadly similar character.

It is not without interest to note that when the "Monthly Marketing Review"—the progenitor of this journal—was first issued by the Marketing Bureau in April, 1937, it was the only periodical of its type then circulating in Australia. Its intention was to provide "a miscellany of matters relating to the marketing of primary products at home and abroad," and more particularly to present concise summaries of the happenings in New South Wales markets during the month preceding. Issued in mimeographed form, this necessarily restricted its circulation and perhaps it was of most use to those intent on keeping abreast of the trends of the parochial markets. In January, 1945, following the amalgamation of the Economics and Marketing Divisions of the Department of Agriculture, the title of the periodical was altered to "Review of Marketing and Agricultural Economics" to indicate a change in scope and interests. More recently still (January, 1946), the "Review" became a printed monthly periodical. This form it has retained for the past three years.

There is an obvious dearth of readily accessible material in Australia which would help those attempting to reach a reasonably full understanding of the composition, structure, development and problems of the agriculture of this country. Fact finding investigations and research to these ends have been, in fact, limited. There are, again, all too few references to be found in State departmental publications which would assist in creating an informed producer opinion upon current and often controversial agricultural marketing and economic affairs. Accurate information, nevertheless, is often available if only it could be prepared and put into print in a conveniently available periodical. The "Review," in a special sense, may be said to have been a pioneer in this field in Australia, catering, as it has attempted to do, for these general purposes. It has been joined by a quarterly periodical issued by the Commonwealth Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and at least it may now be believed that the work of turning over the ground has actually commenced, for the tools with which to do it have been partly forged.

In New South Wales, the "Review" is only a small part of the mechanism by which the Department of Agriculture releases information. Apart from the many bulletins, articles, reports and statements issued by the technical and administrative services, its Marketing and Agricultural Economics Division now prepares daily market reports, mimeographed "Weekly Marketing Notes," a monthly report upon "Production Trends," a printed monthly "Review of Pastoral Conditions," periodic production reviews and forecasts and regular contributions to the "Agricultural Gazette." The "Review" is reserved primarily as a vehicle for the permanent recording of the original research and investigational work of the Division. It is here necessary to distinguish between the statement of fact or findings which to be of value must needs be made public quickly, and the general reviewing article which in its preparation does not so easily conform to a strict time schedule. For these latter a less frequently rather than a more frequently issued periodical is to be preferred.

Suffice it to note that in the opinion of those responsible for its preparation, the change in publication policy now scheduled for the "Review" should lead to its serving an increasingly useful function.