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EDITORIAL

FROM this number the Editorship of *Africa* will be undertaken by Professor John Middleton who has accepted the invitation made by the Executive Council at its meeting in June 1972. We hope and expect that this will begin another considerable period in which the Institute's journal will continue to be one of the main publications through which current advances in research on African Studies are presented.

Consistent with the objectives of the founders of the Institute, *Africa* has not sought to promote a single discipline, still less a particular school of thought. It has, rather, endeavoured to seek out and present studies which, whether by the freshness of their subject-matter or by their originality of method, could contribute significantly to the growing body of new knowledge of the cultural life and social institutions of the peoples of Africa. And this task has been viewed from a perspective, also initially set by the Institute, that has sought to bring to bear on the manifold opportunities, challenges, and problems arising in contemporary Africa some of the findings of sound and disinterested research into the background and character of the changing circumstances from which these stem.

As a retiring Editor, after twenty-five years, we would like to thank both the very many authors and also the numerous scholars who have advised, very often with valuable constructive criticism, on articles offered to *Africa*, for their co-operation and sometimes their forbearance in the detailed work of securing effective presentation of published studies. This has often given rise to exchanges between author and editor which have we believe been intellectually rewarding to both.

To Miss Barbara Pym, who has also served for many years and will continue for a time as Assistant Editor, both the Editor and contributors have been greatly indebted for the most considerate way in which she has dealt with the presentation of copy, the arrangements for book reviews, and the assembling of material for Notes and News.

We know that Members of the Institute and those who will contribute in future to the pages of *Africa* will accord to Professor Middleton the confidence and support which we have enjoyed. And we wish him every satisfaction and success in the Editorship of a journal now approaching its forty-fifth year of publication.

D. F.

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