

EDITORIAL

This volume will be the last one to carry my name as Europe-based Editor of the *Journal of Catalysis*. It would be inappropriate not to mark the occasion with a valedictory editorial, since there are many to whom I would like to express my thanks. The *Journal of Catalysis* was less than 10 years old when I succeeded the Founding Editor, Professor Jan de Boer. It was my pleasure to work closely with the other Founding Editor, Professor Pierce Selwood, for enough years to appreciate the fine foundation which they had laid and the scientific standards they had boldly set. The challenge of maintaining and even improving those standards has been one that I have shared with three other coeditors during the past 25 years, and my first thanks are to them for outstanding contributions and warm cooperation. Keith Hall, Gary Haller, and Nick Delgass in turn successfully and good-naturedly mastered the technique of introducing American initiative and professionalism into the old-world orthodoxy of the Stone regime, each of us focussing with our own particular style on the same challenge of high standards. I must also thank the countless authors who have submitted their manuscripts to me and the hundreds of referees who have unstintingly given their time to reviewing articles and improving them.

It has always been my aim to write personally to both authors and referees, and I have greatly appreciated the cooperative response and consideration which has come in return. Editing is more than the routine business of despatching forms; the human side of interpreting reports and making considered judgments has to be balanced against expediency. Most authors acknowledge the value of critical input from referees and also the merits of a final polish by the editor and publisher. Given that the work reported has the required standard, the reward of having a well-written paper is that it will be a well-read paper. Although the texts may not reveal it, a quick scan of the outstanding international mix of addresses on the title pages of the *Journal of Catalysis* papers will indicate that the majority of authors are unlikely to have English as their first language. The effort required to write concisely and accurately in a foreign language needs to be recognised more widely by those who never attempt it. As an editor who has relied extensively for expert opinion from referees in numerous countries, I take this opportunity to acknowledge gratefully that extra effort also freely made by them.

Editorial work generates extensive correspondence. I have been helped by a succession of secretaries and, particularly, by Helen Hobbs, who has met my meticulous secretarial demands with unflinching patience since 1983. Finally, the *Journal of Catalysis* owes an undefinable debt to my wife for her support during so many editing hours that might otherwise have been shared leisure.

This editorial is not the place to highlight the changes in catalysis research since 1962, but a few brief comments are in order. The *Journal of Catalysis* volumes properly reflect all those developments which have occurred in heterogeneous catalysis and many of the spectacular advances made in surface science, too. During my stewardship I have particularly welcomed mature accounts of completed research, since for one thing these have the greatest promise of continued citation, and I have treated short descriptions of as yet open-ended ventures, whose quality is not so easy to judge, with less enthusiasm. This may have been construed as disfavouring some areas of work, and if so, I regret it. It deserves to be reiterated, for instance, that the *Journal* has always been open to receiving definitive papers in homogeneous catalysis and

does not restrict itself to heterogeneous catalysis. Indeed, concepts in homogeneous catalysis have much to offer the general understanding of catalytic mechanisms, with lessons to be learned for reactions among species weakly adsorbed on surfaces. The *Journal of Catalysis* would profit by reflecting more endeavours in homogeneous catalysis, especially in view of the current catalytic interests in the synthesis of fine chemicals.

Professor Roel Prins will succeed me as the Europe-based Editor. He will bring a wide range of talents and a catholic knowledge of catalytic science to the editorship. I take leave of you confident that he deserves and will win the same full support and cooperation that you have generously shown to me.

Frank S. Stone