I wish to express my deep gratitude to Prof. P. N. Bhaduri, Ph.D., F.N.I., Head of the Department of Botany, Presidency College, Calcutta, under whose constant guidance the work has been carried out.

My thanks are also due to Dr. R. H. Richharia, Director, Central Rice Research Institute, Cuttack, Mr. S. Sampath, Cytogeneticist, Central Rice Research Institute, Cuttack, Mr. G. N. Mitra, Assistant Economic Botanist, Govt. of West Bengal, Dr. H. Siregar, Director, Cereals Research Institute, Bogor and Dr. N. Parthasarathy, Regional Rice Improvement Specialist, FAO, Bangkok, for their kind help in obtaining the research material.

I must thank Shri Amitabha Lahiri, Department of Statistics, University of Calcutta for his constant help in the statistical calculations. I am also indebted to all my colleagues of this laboratory for their ungrudging assistance specially in the final phase of the preparation of this thesis.

The data presented in this thesis have
been gathered during the course of a research project, which is still continuing in the Department of Botany, Presidency College, Calcutta, sponsored by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. I wish to express my gratitude to the ICAR for providing me with the opportunity to work as a Research Assistant in the above research project.