

Commentary

By GROMATICUS

RESCUE !

DESPITE initial doubts from some, "Rescue" is gathering strength. The 100,000 leaflets directed at archaeologically minded people are producing an ever increasing number of donations and subscriptions. The target is an ambitious one, £50,000 to £100,000 annually in donations and subscriptions, and £1 million in capital, but one which the Holding Committee is confident of reaching—with the help of everyone, archaeologists and general public alike. Needless to say "Rescue" is seeking charitable status.

Obviously, administrative difficulties are arising with the vast amount of correspondence being generated as donations, suggestions and congratulations flow into Worcester. Sympathisers can help by not being too pernickety. Initially there is bound to be some well ordered chaos and mistakes are always likely to occur in a nascent organisation. A tolerant and benevolent attitude will doubtlessly be of great assistance to the overworked administrative staff.

One of the biggest problems that "Rescue" will face is that of keeping down overheads. Local societies and groups can help by appointing Liaison Officers to handle matters at a lower echelon level. They can, of course, also endeavour to persuade every one of their members to become subscribers !

PROFITIOUS MOMENT

RESCUE SEEMS to have been launched at a most propitious moment. Although thousands of sites have been destroyed in the past decade without record and without general regret, it is only now that the public are becoming sympathetic enough for such a project as "Rescue" to succeed.

In-words such as "conservation" and "environment" are on everybody's lips. With television and newspapers sponsoring excavations, producing special publications and generally banging the drum for archaeology and history an excellent climate for the

acceptance of "Rescue" is now being created. In particular "Animal, Vegetable or Mineral?" should be a very potent force if only it can recapture its phenomenal popularity of the 1950's.

The seeds are being sown and local societies and groups can help to reap the harvest by giving "Rescue" enthusiastic publicity at their meetings, at special displays, on excavations and in fact in all activities where the public are encountered. It is essential to win over their minds and hearts to the cause of **their** historic past, especially when there are threats as dangerous as that posed by the electronic treasure hunters.

SURREY EMERGENCY

THE EMERGENCY scheme which the Council for Kentish Archaeology has been successfully operating for a number of years, is well known to most archaeologists in the south-east. The scheme is often a matter of discussion and admiration.

Now that Surrey Archaeological Society is successfully beginning to follow in Kent's footsteps (see page 264), some call is being made for a similar scheme to be operated by the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society. Such a proposition has of course been discussed in the past, but because of the unusually close relationship existing between societies in inner London, such a formal organisation has never been considered necessary.

Rescue operations in the past, be they in the City or at Brentford, London Airport or at Battersea, have all been met. It would be wrong to tamper with well tried arrangements.

LATE PUBLICATION

The Editor regrets the very late publication of this issue which has been caused by events beyond the control of the magazine.