

An Editorial Appeal.

THE editorship of this Journal with its present number passes from the hands of one who for over thirty-five years had devoted much thought and care to its production. On another page some attempt has been made to acknowledge that debt. It was assuredly the desire of the late President that after he had passed away the Society should continue to prosper and its members increase rather than lessen their interest in the Journal with which it is associated.

The new Editor therefore appeals to members to send him contributions relating to the history and antiquities of the Royal County. The Journal of this Society should not bear unblushingly upon its pages the impress of the Editor's own hastily conceived contributions. The present number, therefore, must not be taken as indicating the position to which it is hoped, with the help of members of the Society, to raise the status of the Journal as a readable and authoritative contribution to current archaeological research.

In order that members may not be diffident in sending matter for the pages of the Journal the Editor has endeavoured to indicate in the following notes the kind of material that will be welcomed in addition to the more scholarly contributions of the archaeological expert.

It is common knowledge that the face of the English countryside is rapidly changing—there may be divergent views upon the value of this scientific invasion—but the fact remains that the coming of the internal combustion engine with its resultant means of more speedy and direct communication is opening up hundreds of miles of virgin soil and relegating torturous and narrow highways to a seclusion which will be a fount of pleasurable hypotheses to our remote successors.

Meanwhile the intersection of the countryside by new arterial roads is bringing to light buried treasure of past ages; not necessarily hoards of precious metals or caches of currency, but what to the historian and social investigator is more precious—evidences

of the life of the people who moved and had their being in this land in the distant past. Probably the most difficult problem in research work is to visualise with fidelity the *ordinary* everyday affairs of the mass of the population in past ages. The "pots and pans" of the respective periods have helped considerably in this connexion. It is significant that the study of early Chinese pottery and porcelain has been materially advanced since the end of the nineteenth century by the opening up of grave sites due to the construction of roads and railways in that vast land.

While it is certain that such wholesale legacies of the past will not enrich the investigator in our own county, important finds will occur and unless careful records are made by competent folk at the time of the discovery information of considerable value will be lost. It is hoped, therefore, that every member of the Society will keep a watchful eye upon new developments in his or her district and report any finds. The Editor will undertake that the discovery is recorded and an investigation made, where necessary, with all speed.

But it is not only in this field that our energies need to be directed. It is desirable that the Journal shall become a repository, so far as Berkshire is concerned, of data upon all the ramifications of the historic past. The Editor would therefore plead for notes on the following, accompanied whenever possible by photographs or drawings.

The threatened demolition of ancient houses and unexpected treasures revealed in the course of their restoration.

Genealogical facts not necessarily relating to families in Debrett.

Local place-names of puzzling origin.

Diversion of trackways and footpaths and ancient bridle-paths.

Barn structure and long-past customs relating to land cultivation.

Mazes and curiously-shaped land formations, particularly when rectangular in form, and the names by which they are locally known.

Excavations on known historic sites, both ecclesiastical and secular.

Objects of antiquarian interest recovered from the earth.

Finds during hedging and ditching, particularly of Neolithic, Bronze or Iron Age date.

Church furniture and fittings now in lay hands.

Old election and turnpike literature.

Inns : their associations with clerical and social life.

Local livelihoods that are passing into desuetude.

Church plate, particularly any in lay hands.

Local dated doors, chimneys, pigeon-cotes, stained glass and tokens.

Deeds relating to the succession of estates and land tenure.

Wills.

Pontage and haulage regulations for flash-locks in connection with Berkshire rivers.

Traditional battle sites and localised finds thereon.

Records of stocking and netting of lakes and streams.

Reports of enquiries *re* mills and rights of head-water.

Woods and Commons and forestry data.

Inventories of ancient houses not already recorded.

Details of " Grand Tours " made by Berkshire gentlemen.

Ancient private diaries.

Commercial undertakings with which old Berkshire families have been associated.

Finds of ancient wallpapers and wash drawings on disclosed walls.

Concealed cupboards and their contents.

Local literary material associated with the rebellions of 1688, 1715 and 1745.

Contents of ancient wells and pits.

Pottery, porcelain and glass of local historic significance.

Literary memoranda of Berkshire writers.

Finds of the Palaeolithic age.

Church bells and bell lore.

Gallows and gallows records.

In fine, anything of historic interest connected with the Royal County.
