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English Place-Names

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such work, and his book is full of useful hints and methods which will save trouble to those who may be confronted with a similar task.

The general principles of custodianship of county records and the definitions of different kinds of documents, with suggestions as to the comparative values of "records," are followed by hints on their reception and classification, cataloguing, making up for storing, repairing, and the final deposit in the muniment room.

The necessary rules governing the use of the records when required for consultation are carefully thought out and one is glad to note the emphasis laid on the importance of having a County Archivist who should be responsible for their care, and also be qualified to make them of use to students. A succinct account of English County Institutions by office and subject will be useful to those not acquainted with the varied classes of documents relating to local administration.

ENGLISH PLACE-NAMES.

An English Place-Name Society has been founded (1923) to carry out the survey inaugurated under the auspices of the British Academy in 1922. Its primary work is to collect from historical documents of every kind, whether printed or in manuscript, the early forms of all names to be found on the six-inch Ordnance Survey map, and of all linguistic, historical, archæological, and topographical information relevant to their interpretation. The work is under the direction of Professor A. Mawer, M.A., of Liverpool University, where the organisation of the Society is established. A special feature will be the use of early unpublished material deposited in the Public Record Office and elsewhere.

A further development of the Society's work will be the publication of the material collected in a series of volumes dealing with the place-names of a county or other convenient area, and the co-operation of all the chief scholars, both English and foreign, has been secured. It is proposed to begin with an "Introduction to the Survey of English Place-Names" which will indicate the present state of our knowledge, and the lines where the possibilities of future progress lie, and also deal with the meaning and distribution of the elements most commonly found in our place-names. A pamphlet setting out the objects of the Society, with its rules and list of members, has been issued from the Secretarial office at Liverpool University, where all inquiries should be addressed.

The County Organiser for Gloucestershire is Mr. St. Clair Baddeley, Castle Hale, Painswick, Stroud, who published his *Place Names of Gloucestershire* in 1913.

RECORDS OF YORK.

The importance of the municipal and ecclesiastical records of the City of York is drawn attention to in a note issued by the University of Leeds. Evidence as to the local value of the ecclesiastical records is shown by the most interesting paper in our *Transactions* (xliii, 85-180) by Dr. Hamilton Thompson on "The Jurisdiction of the Archbishops of York in Gloucestershire," the matter for which was abstracted from the diocesan records at York. Dr. Thompson, who is now Reader in Medieval History at Leeds University, is one of the signatories to the note, which is issued primarily to draw attention to the fact that the municipal archives of York are now available for all *bona fide* students in the fourteenth century Merchant's Hall, in the Fossgate. Dr. Maud Sellers has been appointed City Archivist and is ready to give assistance to those who may wish to take advantage of the facilities so generously offered by the City Council of York and their Town Clerk.

A ROMANO-BRITISH ALTAR AT SIDDINGTON.

At Siddington House, between the kitchen garden and the former bowling-green, still stand the remains of a once very solid stone Altar. The formidable crack dividing it through the middle suggests that at some period a bough of a tree has fallen upon it rather than the lightning of the Gods. The measurements approximately are 2ft. 10ins. (length) by 2ft. 7ins. (height). In 1901 owing to the kindness of the late Mr. Christopher Bowly and Mrs. Bowly, I made a careful sketch of it for the purpose of puzzling out the far-decay'd inscription. The tradition about it is that it has been about the place always, and that it was originally found there in the days of Bathurst ownership (c.) 1825. If that is the case local probabilities may be said to be suggestive of origin. For, the fine grove of beeches and limes at Siddington crown a very marked long knoll or upland, and it may well represent a sacred grove of other times near the Irmin Street and but a mile from *Corinium*.

The front of the altar has been so cut as to form what is technically known as a *tabella ansata*, upon which the *Dedicatio* was carven. The weather (and frost with it) has now, twenty-three years later, obliterated the lettering. Both Professor Haverfield