

## EDITORIAL

The favourable reception given to our first volume of *Architectural History*, and the subsequent increase in membership of the Society, have been gratifying. New subscribers are regularly being enrolled and among them notable libraries in this country and overseas. The names of those who joined after January, when the present volume went to press, are not included in the list on page 75. As a result of larger income we shall soon be able to make a significant increase in the amount of material published each year.

The articles in this second volume range in date from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century, and in substance from archive transcript to personal assessment of the fruits of historical research. The great variety in subject matter and treatment is typical of the present state of historical studies as a whole, and it may be taken to be a sign of strength and health. Art history has yet to establish what are to be its most valuable forms, and particularly in architectural history there is room for a great deal of thoughtful experiment, between the possible extremes, of purely archival work on the one hand, and subjective criticism on the other. We need facts, and we need to understand the significance of the facts through humane and imaginative interpretation. In historical study accurate and completely scrupulous scholarship is absolutely essential, but facts alone may be of little value without insight into the human motives, feelings and actions behind them. On the foundation of unwavering respect for the ideals of academic research we may hope to see the architectural historian develop in his role of interpreter, linking the great architecture of the past with the living art of the present.

It is, as we said in our first Editorial, our intention to advance the study of architectural history upon a wide front. To do this we must not only remember that we are studying an art; we must cultivate the art of presenting our studies. Whatever *genre* the architectural historian may find congenial, between the extremes we have mentioned above, the presentation of his work in a form which will be intelligible is important. Scholarship we must have; thought and imagination must build upon that foundation; but the most erudite research, and the most ingenious interpretation, are not enough without a good style of presentation. When we write for publication we do not merely indulge our taste for expression: if we neglect to seek that lucidity which comes from a good literary style we may bewilder, or even lose, those readers who are the reason for our writings.

This is not a literary journal, but history itself is at least as much an art as a science, and we write the history of an art. In typography we are doing the best we can, within our means, and in the art of writing we shall try to maintain a high standard.