

Scheme for ensuring Systematic Preparation for a good History of the County of Somerset.

Drawn up by H. Hobhouse, Esq., M.P., Chairman of the Committee.

Appoint a small Organisation Committee of persons specially interested in the subject, and representing as far as possible all parts of the County.

The organisation to be two-fold, so as

- (A) To provide local workers in every district in the County.
- (B) To distribute the treatment of general subjects and the examination of records among a body of suitable experts.

A—LOCAL ORGANISATION.

The whole County to be mapped into districts. Each district to be under the care of a Local Secretary. The number of districts to be regulated by the supply and zeal of Local Secretaries. Each Local Secretary to be responsible for seeing that the work of preparation is being carried on systematically for each of his Parishes. He must get assistants wherever he can, supplying them with proper directions (see below). He should report progress at least once a year to the Organisation Committee, and transmit to them from time to time the materials that have been collected.

The Organisation Committee to draw up carefully-considered forms of directions for local workers, and suggestions for the guidance of Local Secretaries; to collate all the data now available for each Parish, and supply a copy to each Local Secretary for additions and corrections, together with a 6-inch Ordnance Map of his district; and to collect and file all returns sent in, and, as far as possible, supply deficiencies.

B—ORGANISATION OF SUBJECTS.

After the enquiries of the Local Secretaries are fairly complete, the Organisation Committee should proceed to invite capable experts to prepare chapters on special subjects to form an introductory volume. Such subjects might be as follows:—*e.g.*, Pre-historic and Roman remains; Architecture, Civil and Ecclesiastical; Geology; Natural History; Agriculture; Arts, Trades, and Industries; Dialects and Literature; Social Life, Customs and Folk-Lore; Political History, Taxation and Divisions; Ecclesiastical and Monastic History and Institutions. These chapters to be prepared under the general direction of a competent editor or editors, who will also deal with the materials collected by the Local Secretaries.

All materials in the possession of the Society to be freely placed at the disposal of the experts and editors.

The Organisation Committee should, in consultation with the Committee of the Somerset Record Society, draw up a list of Records, whether in the County or elsewhere, needing examination, *e.g.*, County, Episcopal, Capitular and Municipal Archives, Monastic, MSS. and Private Collections. They should take steps to get these examined by capable persons. Parish Registers and purely local records should be examined by the local workers where competent.

The Committee should also issue general directions as to the principal lines of research.

The necessary expenses of correspondence, printing directions, lists, etc., purchasing maps, and clerical assistance, should be defrayed out of a special County History fund.

DIRECTIONS TO A LOCAL SECRETARY FOR COLLECTING MATERIALS
FOR A PARISH HISTORY.

The County History of Somerset now in course of preparation, must necessarily comprise a complete collection of Parish Histories. With the view to carry out this important object, the Organisation Committee of the Somerset Archæological Society would feel greatly obliged if you could supply the following data connected with your Parish. It is, of course, essential that the information supplied should be as accurate and complete as possible; and if it is given in a concise and plain form, much time and trouble will be saved.

DATA REQUIRED.

Local Names.

I.—Give the earliest form of spelling and (if possible) the etymology of the name of the Parish, and of any Manor, Tithing or other place of importance within it; also give a list of any interesting or remarkable names of fields, hills, streams, roads and lanes, whether actually in use or obsolete. The Tithe Maps and Terriers should be consulted for this purpose.

Secular Remains and Buildings.

II.—Enumerate any Pre-Historic, British, Roman, or other early Remains, and Medieval Buildings or their Sites, which may be of interest. Plans and measurements should be given where possible, and all inscriptions should be copied carefully.

Ecclesiastical Remains and Buildings.

III.—Give any particulars concerning the fabric of the Church. Note all Monuments, Arms, Furniture, Carving, Fonts, Bells, Plate, Glass, etc., that would be of interest.

[N.B.—A form of questions on this head should be supplied by the Organisation Committee.]

Natural Features and Industries.

IV.—Describe shortly the situation, extent, conformation, scenery and climate of the Parish; its Geology, Minerals, Caverns and Quarries; any special Flora or Fauna, giving the size and height of remarkable Trees; its modes of Agriculture, past and present; Forests, Commons, and Enclosures; its Trades and Manufactures, past and present; any Fairs or Markets; any Bridges, Canals, or remarkable Roads, Springs, and pieces of Water.

Folk-Lore.

V.—Describe any peculiar Customs, Ceremonies, Costumes, Traditions, or Superstitions, Sports and Punishments, both used and obsolete; Public-house Signs, etc.

Local Records.

VI.—Give a short account and (if possible) striking extracts from

the Parish Registers and Churchwardens' Accounts, Manorial Rolls, and any Family or Estate Documents which illustrate the history of the Parish, or of other parishes in the County. Also any historical facts connected with the Advowson, Tithe, Glebe, and Manor, Incumbents, Land Owners and Worthies of the Parish, with which you may become acquainted.

Dialect.

VII.—Notice any peculiarities of Dialect, or local expressions, with their meanings.

N.B.—Where any of the data required are already available, only additions and corrections need be made on the blank forms accompanying the documents sent herewith.
