

MEMORABILIA MCMXV.

CONGRESS OF ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETIES, 1915.—The Report of the Earthworks Committee, like most of such issues, is briefer than usual. *Apropos* the training of our new levies, it remarks that "the extent of entrenching, hutting, and other work going on all over the country, often on ground that has never been under tillage, might have been expected to result in many interesting discoveries. So far, no reports of any such finds have come to hand, nor have there been complaints of damage or destruction to ancient earthworks by those engaged on constructing modern ones." But it was during the digging of trenches near Chatham, before the War, that the discovery was made of a colossal prehistoric elephant whose proportions dwarf even those of the American Imperial Mammoth, previously regarded as the largest elephant that ever existed, and was re-constructed on paper by Mr. W. P. Pyecraft (Illust. Lond. News, Jan. 8, 1916).

MEDMENHAM.—The Rev. J. E. Field, in "The Myth of the Pent Cuckoo," described a little-known earthwork running parallel with Grim's Dyke across the bend of the Thames from Benson, Oxon, to Medmenham in this county. It terminated at each end in a quadrangular camp on the river, the still existing Danes' Ditches at Medmenham and an entrenchment near the church at Benson, which has now disappeared, though records of it are to be found in local histories, and its site is known.

BURNHAM ABBEY. — A photograph, dated last October, shows the Chapter House fitted up as a chapel. Presumably a new floor has been laid and other drastic alterations made.

DR. JAMES BERRY, one of our Vice-Presidents, whose noble work in Serbia is well known, is reported to have fallen into the hands of the enemy.

BUCKS COUNTRY HOUSES.—The first two numbers of this year's issue of "Country Life" contain admirable pictures of West Wycombe House, Church, and Park, upon which some comments and historical corrections are made by "Sigma" in the *Bucks Herald* of Jan. 15. The north-west view of the house is the best architecturally, and the East Doric Portico is quite satisfactory, but on the south front the two-storied long open colonnades are less pleasing, giving a weak look and suggesting a tropical climate. The ornamentation of the park followed in date that of Stowe, and rather suggests some emulation. Thus we find the "Great Archway," the "Island Temple," "Daphne's Temple," and "Temple of the Four Winds."

The following among the older and more interesting houses in the county have also been illustrated in this favourite paper:—

Chequers Court,	Hall Barn,
Chicheley Hall,	Harleyford,
Chilton,	Hartwell,
Claydon House,	Marlow Place,
Denham Place,	Shardeloes,
Dorton House,	Stowe,
Gayhurst,	Wotton House.

And a notable modern house, Nashdom, Taplow, which serves to show that we have men, not many, who are as capable of producing worthy domestic architecture as they of the past.

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.—Indirectly the War seems to have acted adversely upon St. Paul's in diverting our thoughts and our subscriptions from the mischief to the fabric which has long been in progress and has not yet been stayed. About two years ago an expenditure of £70,000 was estimated to be necessary, not more than half of which had been collected when war broke upon us, and further subscriptions are now needed. The south-west pier, under the dome, on which much has been done, has been reported lately to be showing even graver conditions than were feared before investigation had gone so far. The danger is said to arise not so much from recent settlement as

from the rusting of iron, internal degeneracy, and the very inadequate repairs executed at some earlier period.

THE BRANDON FLINT-KNAPPERS.—The Central News, in correction of a statement it had previously made, stated recently, with an apology, that it was Mr. Robert Field, also a flint-knapper who had died about the end of last year, not Mr. John Snare, and further informs us that the business of flint-knapping is still being carried on in Brandon by Mr. Fred Snare, who is a direct representative of the business which, for many generations, has been practised by his family.

FIRST GREAT SEAL OF CHARLES II.—"The Times" (Oct. 19, 1915) reported the discovery at the Bodleian of this seal, supplying a gap in the series of Great Seals of England—otherwise complete except for the fourth seal of Henry VI. for French affairs. The Royal Seal of Charles I. was captured at Oxford in 1646, and in 1649 Parliament ordered a new Great Seal of the Commonwealth, and the old one to be broken up; but the Prince of Wales, at The Hague, having assumed the title of King of England, provided himself with a Great Seal of his own. Clarendon says this was lost in the defeat at Worcester. The British Museum charter, which was hitherto the sole evidence of its use, is dated Sept. 18, 1649. The seal is in dark yellow wax, and its diameter six inches. A portion of the obverse (where it had been attached by a ribbon) is missing. The obverse shows the King enthroned; on the dexter side a lion supporting a banner of St. George; on the sinister a unicorn gorged and chained, holding a banner of St. Andrew. The reverse shows the King in Roman armour on a prancing horse; in the field the royal arms, encircled with an inscribed Garter; on the other side a double rose ensigned with a crown. Between the horse's legs a lion stands. The legend: *Carolus II. Dei Gratia Magnae Britanniae Franciae et Hiberniae Rex Fidei Defensor.*