

WE are pleased to preface the sixteenth volume of the Records of Buckinghamshire by some verses of Lord Cottesloe, for thirty-one years Lord-Lieutenant of the County, some-time President—and now a Vice-President of our Society, and who in 1952 celebrated his ninetieth birthday.

A VILLAGE IN BERNWOOD

Lord Cottesloe

Let us dwell by the meads where the milch cow feeds
 In the Vale which my fathers knew,
With the ash and the oak of the English folk
 And the elms that the Romans grew.

For the sombre firs are but foreigners
 That the wanderer's eye shall meet,
From the Chilterns' ridge to old Thornborough Bridge,
 And from Bicester to Watling Street.

When the Saxon north from the Thames went forth
 To abide in the forest land,
He secured his lot in an open spot
 With a trickling stream at hand;

Then a palisade for defence he made,
 And a ditch he dug in the clay,
To protect his home from the thieves who roam,
 And his byre from the beasts of prey.

When at last his few to a hamlet grew
 That the settler's name still bears,
Then they built on a height in the village site
 A church for their praise and prayers.

Still the naming tells of the cool clear wells
 Where the hart to his watering sped,
Where the dappled herd in the green glade stirred,
 And the buck and the wild boar fed.

In a thousand years of hopes and fears
 Has the village played its part,
And has held to its ways in the changing days
 With a steadfast English heart.