

THE *MONUMENTA GERMANIAE HISTORICA*: PRESENT STATUS AND PLANS

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THE revival of the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* is a matter of such obvious importance to mediaeval scholars of all fields that information on its reorganization, the fate of its library and archives, the status of projects left unfinished before the war, and its plans for future work, may perhaps be welcome to members of the Mediaeval Academy. Then too—for this, frankly, is also an unsolicited appeal for American support for this great organization — many may wish to know of the *Monumenta's* current difficulties and needs.

Our information is based on personal visits to the *Monumenta's* headquarters in Munich and Pommersfelden (Franconia) and on a *Bericht für die Jahre 1943–1948* prepared by Professor F. Baethgen, now president of the Institute, which will ultimately be published in the *Deutsches Archiv* (the *Monumenta's* periodical) and in the Transactions of the Academies of Berlin, Munich, and Vienna.

Like most learned institutions in Germany, the *Monumenta* suffered severe losses during the war and has been seriously affected by the division of Germany into zones of occupation. Fortunately, its greatest possession, the library of almost sixty thousand volumes, has been saved, since this was removed in 1944 from Berlin to the castle of the Counts Schönborn in Pommersfelden, where it is still located. On the other hand, much of the material collected in the last hundred years for the preparation of future editions — especially most of the notes taken in the archives of Germany and other European countries — was destroyed by fire in one of the salt-mines where they had been deposited. In some fields, therefore, particularly in the *Diplomata* of the later Carolingian and Salic periods and the charters of the Burgundian kings, 'the work of the *Monumenta* has been set back by many decades, and it will take protracted and patient efforts to replace these losses even in some measure.' Many of the collaborators of the *Monumenta* have lost most or even all of the material which they had collected for editorial purposes. Thus, for example, the editions of such important texts as the *Decretum* of Burchard of Worms, the so-called Tegernsee collection of letters of the twelfth century, and the writings of Engelbert of Admont, will have to be started completely anew. Another great loss was the heavy destruction of the stock of printed editions in the fires which the store-houses of the *Monumenta's* publishing houses and printing establishments suffered. The next issue of the *Deutsches Archiv* will contain a list of the volumes still available.

The aftermath of the war brought other difficulties. Communication between the various centers of work (chiefly Pommersfelden, Berlin, Munich, and Vienna) was hardly possible at first, and even now is somewhat precarious. The question of financial support presented difficult problems which have been partially solved through the assistance of local and regional administrations. These have shown a remarkable understanding of the importance of this whole enterprise.

Under these circumstances a number of prominent German and Austrian mediaevalists, and representatives of the German and Austrian academies, met to lay new foundations for the re-establishment of the *Monumenta*. During the Nazi regime the Institute had become strongly centralized and dominated by the state. Now it has been decided to restore the autonomous and corporative administration under which the *Monumenta* existed from the time of its foundation in 1819 up to 1935. Hence, the work is being guided by a *Zentralkommission* which has the right of co-optation and of electing an executive chairman (*Präsident*). This central committee consists of fourteen members, of whom six represent the five academies of Germany and the one of Austria: F. Rörig (Berlin), F. Ernst (Heidelberg), H. Heimpel (Göttingen), Th. Frings (Leipzig), W. Goetz (Munich), A. von Loehr (Vienna). The other members are W. Holtzmann (Bonn), H. Grundmann (Münster), H. Aubin (Hamburg), H. Mitteis (Munich), W. Winkler (Munich), L. Santifaller (Vienna), and M. Beck (Zürich). The new central seat is Munich, where the new president