



SIR EDWARD KEELING

M.C., F.S.A., M.P.



THE death of Sir Edward Keeling on November 23rd, 1954 was a grave loss to the School which he had served as its first Honorary Secretary ever since its foundation in 1929. It was our good fortune to have enjoyed his devoted service for twenty-six years during which the School prospered both at home and abroad.

Keeling was exceptionally well fitted for this voluntary task. During the First World War he was wounded at the battle of Ctesiphon; later on he came to know Gertrude Bell, and in 1933 returned to Baghdad for a short time on business. This enabled him in characteristic fashion to seize the opportunity of helping the first Expedition sponsored by the School during the preparations for the dig at Arpachiyah; his sense of economy, drive, and practical turn of mind were invaluable, both then and afterwards.

When he was in office there was always the feeling that a wise counsellor would be at hand to meet any difficulty, and he was a staunch friend, utterly dependable. After he entered Parliament it seemed difficult to believe that he could still find the time to assist us, for he served on many different public bodies. But the importance of fostering any activity concerned with the recovery and conservation of ancient monuments had a special appeal to him. What was old and beautiful was to him no less important than the immediate concerns of the present. Only a few days before the Annual General Meeting he was struck down by an illness which brought his life to an end. It was typical of the man that he had attended to every detail for the Meeting—the last of many at which he had so thoughtfully served.

To Lady Keeling we extend out sincerest sympathy in her loss. The School and all his friends will miss him greatly, but will rejoice in the knowledge that he had a large part in strengthening its foundation and developing its activities. His courage was such that he never relinquished any public duties and so met his end, as he would have wished, still in harness. So long as the School remains his name will not be forgotten.