

Editorial

The Morris Centenary Year should be an occasion for celebration and for new beginnings. It would seem an opportune time therefore for an editor to decide to hand on the role to a successor, who will be able to bring a fresh approach to the task. That is therefore what I have decided to do, having edited *The Journal* since the Spring issue of 1987.

I should like to thank all those who have helped to make my experience so positive – the Society's Committee, and all the contributors, advisors, typesetters, printers, readers. In particular I am indebted to my precursor, Ray Watkinson, for the generosity with which he has given advice based on his unrivalled knowledge of Morris. Without it, my task would have been much more difficult. As it is, I have greatly enjoyed having had the opportunity to contribute through the Society to the expansion of interest in Morris which has been an encouraging aspect of recent years, and I wish my successor (who will be appointed at the Annual General Meeting in May) every success in continuing to promote it in the future.

In 1996 this expansion of interest will undoubtedly continue. The exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum will make the name and achievements of Morris known to an even wider public, as will the numerous other events taking place all over the country. The conference at Exeter College, Oxford will contribute to his reputation in the academic community, as will the publication of the last two volumes of Norman Kelvin's great edition of Morris's letters, and of a large number of other books on or by Morris during the year. Under its new President, Hans Brill, whose energetic commitment has enlivened the Society in the past from the chair of the committee and will now do so from his new elevation, the Society can look forward to its future with confidence.

There is of course some historical irony in this. The world around us is not one that Morris would have accepted or condoned. But his response would, as always, have been constructive. And it is in this respect that the Society, and its individual members, should be following his courageous example. Against the cynicism that is fatalistic about a commercialised future felt to be beyond human control, let us set the last words of Morris's 'Art of the People':

Meanwhile, if these hours be dark, as, indeed, in many ways they are, at least do not let us sit deedless, like fools and fine gentlemen, thinking the common toil not good enough for us, and beaten by the muddle; but rather let us work like good fellows trying by some dim candle-light to set our workshop ready against tomorrow's daylight – that tomorrow, when the civilised world, no longer greedy, strifeful, and destructive, shall have a new art, a glorious art, made by the people and for the people, as a happiness to the maker and the user.

Peter Faulkner

I must apologise for the delay in publishing the promised obituary of the late Edvige Schulte. I am glad to say that her former colleague and friend, Adriana Corrado of the University of Naples, has agreed to provide one for the Autumn issue.