

The Annual Meeting will be held in May, when the Report will be read, Officers elected, and Mr. Treacher will lecture on Ruscombe Church.

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## “History of Shiplake Church.”

*By Emily J. Climenson.*

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**T**HE village of Shiplake has many attractions, and few rowers on the Thames refrain from leaving their boat and ascending the winding path leading to the old village Church, which has many historical associations. It is fortunate in having so able an historian as Mrs. Climenson, the wife of the present vicar, who has just published its history. It possesses all the charm of her former large work on the history of the village, and will be read with much interest by all who visit this ancient shrine. The earliest mention of the Church is in the year 1163, when Walter Giffard, third Earl of Buckinghamshire, and his wife Ermengarde, gave it to the Abbey Church of St. Mary, Missenden, Bucks. But there was an earlier building than this, as the presence of Roman bricks in the South wall of the South Aisle plainly testifies. The Church continued in the possession of the Abbey of Missenden for 365 years, and at the dissolution of monasteries the advowson and great tithes passed into the hands of Thomas Englefield, Lord of the Manor. Henry VIII. left the advowson to the Dean and Canons of Windsor, in whose gift it has ever since remained.

The present South Aisle was the original Church and is late Norman, and the two small pointed windows on each side of the porch are said to be of the date of King Stephen. The tower was originally separated from the Church, and is decorated in style. The columns of the nave are Early English. The Piscina belongs to the 12th century. The nave was built by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, “King of the Romans,” and brother of Henry III., who was Lord of the Manor. The story of the building of the Church, and the descriptions of the carvings and the various altars, are clearly given by the authoress. Unfortunately, the Church has been somewhat severely “restored,” and we lament the destruction of the mural paintings, which were discovered in 1822. Happily, Mrs. Climenson has recovered some sketches of these, which are hung in

the South Aisle, and in her book gives a full description of them. There were two coloured figures of St. Christopher, which protected from sudden death all who gazed on them, and there were figures representing Richard, King of the Romans, and an ecclesiastic, probably the Abbot of Missenden, or the Bishop of Salisbury. The destruction of old wood-work in the Church, and the removal of the Jacobean pulpit, are deplorable pieces of vandalism wrought in the name of "restoration" by Street. The stained glass windows in Shiplake are particularly interesting. The glass was taken from the Abbey of St. Bertin, at St. Omer, having been buried by the Monks during the French Revolution. That in the east window was bought by the Revd. John Boteler, and presented to the Church in 1828, and dates from the 15th century. The monuments are interesting, and are fully described by Mrs. Climenson. Amongst others we notice that of Francis Plowden, of Shiplake Court, the son of the Elizabethan lawyer and author of "Commentaries on the Law"; also that of another Francis Plowden, a devoted Royalist, whose house was besieged and plundered during the Civil War. A notorious Vicar of Shiplake was the Revd. James Granger (1746-76), who added a new word to the English language by his love of illustrating books by adding numerous engravings. This is known as "Grangerizing." One of the most important entries in the register books is the marriage of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, in 1850, to Emily Sellwood, a cousin of Mrs. Rawnsley, the Vicar of Shiplake's wife. Tennyson often stayed at the Vicarage, and wrote there Canto 120 of "In Memoriam." The authoress gives a list of the Vicars of Shiplake from 1229 to the present time, and much other valuable information, and concludes her history with an account of the Abbey of St. Bertin, whence Shiplake derives its beautiful glass.

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## The Church Plate of Berkshire.

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### STANFORD-IN-THE-VALE.

1. Elizabethan Cup. Date letter 1585. Maker's mark B, in a very elaborately shaped shield. It has the usual ornament, but plain, the scroll being placed between parallel lines. The base is plain moulded, and the bowl small. Height  $6\frac{5}{8}$  inches, diameter  $3\frac{5}{8}$  inches.