

But how did it acquire its name? No doubt a pretty story might be woven of saintly monks from Bisham retiring to this secluded corner for devotion, and possibly ablation; but the origin or possible origin of the name remained a mystery, until one day a friend suggested that the French word for meadow was "Pré," and then it dawned on us that French prisoners had been interned at Marlow during the Napoleonic wars (or, during the "old war time," as we used to express it); and the writer of this has often heard a near relative who had been a boy at Marlow Grammar School speak of the poor fellows, and he has seen a sketch of them fishing from the river bank of the meadow. And so the word Pré (their meadow) must have been frequently used by them and its meaning then understood by Marlow people; but with time, though the name remained, its origin had been forgotten. I think it may fairly be assumed that *the mongrel French and English term Pré bridge signifies in English the Meadow Bridge.*

But no doubt on Pré bridge has been uttered the prayer of many a poor prisoner for a speedy release from captivity and return to his loved home in sunny France.—STEPHEN DARBY.

Rebiews.

THE PLACE-NAMES OF BERKSHIRE,—By the REV. WALTER W. SKEAT, D.C.L., Professor of Anglo-Saxon, Cambridge University (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press), 1911. 2s. net.

THE PLACE-NAMES OF BERKSHIRE.—An Essay by F. M. STENTON, M.A., Research Fellow in Local History, University College, Reading.

It is not often that two books appear at the same time dealing with the same subject, and that, too, a somewhat abstruse one. The volume of Professor Skeat comes with a weight of authority that can scarcely be claimed by a "Research Fellow in Local History" of Reading University College, but the latter has some advantage in knowing something of the locality of which the survey treats. Moreover, he does not attempt to interpret the meaning and origin of all Berkshire place-names, but "to consider the local nomenclature of a single county as illustrating some aspects of early English history; in particular, the first stages in the growth of the village community and manor." Useful as this object is, the plan avoids the necessity of discussing certain philological problems, concerning which we should like to have had the opinion of the "Research Fellow in Local History," and to compare his pronouncements with the conclusions of the learned Professor of Anglo-Saxon at the University of Cambridge. However, quite sufficient names are mentioned to enable us in some degree to make certain comparisons. The Professor's lack of local knowledge has led him in one or two instances into error. For example, he mentions Crowthorne as an old name, which he sets to work to explain, whereas it is a modern name given to the village that arose around Wellington College by a former Rector of Sandhurst. He states that Streatley and Stratfield are usually associated with Roman roads, and therein is correct; but he did not know that the latter is situate on the Roman road from Staines to Silchester, denominated the Devil's Highway, and that the former is on the Icknield way that then crossed the Thames. He is woefully wrong about Arborfield, connecting it with *erber* or *herber*, the old French *herbier*, the Latin *herbarium*, a herb-garden. He was ignorant of the old form, *Erburgefild*, which occurs in A.D. 1222 in the *Vetus Registrum Sarisberiense*, or *Edburgefild* in 1220, which seems to militate against Mr. Stenton's idea of a female Hereburh. The Professor does not seem to have heard of the controversy concerning East Garston or Esgarston, and conceives it to be the "East grass town." Mr. Stenton is more correct. The Professor triumphs at Maidenhead, the Maidenhithe, whereas the Research Fellow, omitting *maiden*, gives the last syllable *hache* or *gate*, which, although used in some Close Rolls of the 13th century, is not so early or so frequent as *Maydehuth*, or *hithe*, or *hyth*. Mr. Stenton gives us a learned dissertation on *ing*, and tells us that we must not follow Professor Skeat and say that Reading

means the sons, or family, or tribe of Rede, but interpret it "belongings of Rede," a distinction without a difference. The Professor correctly points out that Uffa is not the same as Offa, though the words are often ignorantly confused, a confusion that seems to be preserved in Mr. Stenton's work when he connects Uffington with Offenham in Worcestershire. The writers are vehemently opposed concerning the vexed derivation of Speen, the Research Fellow clinging to the received theory of Spince, whereas the Professor asserts that there is no possible connection between the names, as the principal vowel sounds are quite irreconcilable. Though there are other differences of interpretation, of course there is a large amount of agreement, and it is pleasant to reflect that, in spite of the science of place-names being somewhat progressive, accepted theories have not generally been upset by new investigations. Both books will prove extremely useful to students of antiquity in the county, who will peruse their pages with added zest when they discover the different views held by the authors, and though not an infallible guide, owing to his lack of local knowledge, acceptance perhaps will be given in doubtful cases to the theories advanced by so great a scholar as Professor Skeat, rather than to Mr. Stenton.

BERKSHIRE (Cambridge County Geographies).—By H. W. MONCKTON, F.L.S. (at University Press, Cambridge).

The series of which this volume is an excellent example is an admirable one. Though intended principally for educational purposes and for the use of schools, these books are valuable to the general reader who needs an accurate and general knowledge of his county. The editorial care exercised by the General Editor, Dr. Guillemard, warrants the accuracy of the descriptions and statements, and the Editors of the volumes have been chosen with care. Mr. Monckton is well known as an expert in geology, and all that relates to that and kindred subjects is authoritative. He is not perhaps so well versed in the history and antiquities of the shire, but he has evidently got up his subject well. We wonder whether he has ever seen the ruins of Reading Abbey, cloister, chapter house, etc. He tells of the Abbey Gate and of the remains belonging to the Hospice of St. John, but not a word of the rest, though there is an illustration of the ruins. Our contributor, the Vicar of Hurley, will quarrel with him for not discovering the Saxon work at the Priory. However, the book has been carefully and accurately written and edited, and the very numerous illustrations and maps add greatly to its interest and value.

HISTORY OF THE GREY FRIARS LODGE OF FREEMASONS, No. 1101.—By G. T. PHILLIPS (THOMAS HUNT, Reading).

The connection of Freemasonry and Archaeology is very close. The Brotherhood traces its descent from a remote past, and its mystic rites have been preserved through the ages, showing close connection with the mediæval guilds and embodied in a reverent and impressive ritual. All this is known only to the initiated. But the outside world sometimes catches glimpses of the work of Freemasonry when a foundation stone is laid with Masonic honours, or when it sees the immense schemes of charity which are carried on and supported by the fraternity, or when a book of this nature is published containing the records of a single Lodge. The name of Grey Friars carries our thoughts back to the venerable 14th century Church at the western end of Friar Street, Reading, once the home of the Friars, which has seen many vicissitudes. The Lodge has been established nigh half-a-century, and its chronicles have been ably written by one of its most distinguished members in later times "as a tribute of gratitude and friendly feeling towards those who have passed the Chair, and who have handed down to a younger generation a heritage of which they may well be proud." The preface has been written by the oldest member of the Lodge, Mr. Edward Margrett, who ranks high in the annals of Freemasonry in Berkshire and England. The record of each year's work is faithfully given, and the author is to be congratulated on the production of a volume which will be a cherished possession of his Brethren, and a witness of the good work accomplished by the Lodge. Amongst the members we notice the names of two distinguished antiquaries, Mr. Keyser, the President of the Berks Archæological Society, and the late Rev. J. M. Guilding, to whom that Society owes its re-formation in 1871, and for many years its subsequent prosperity.