

of the Society shows it has in no small degree contributed by its publications and meetings to promote the study of local history and antiquities in the county, and we trust that it will long continue to carry on its useful mission. The following is the letter which has been received by the officers of the Society from the Queen's secretary :—

Balmoral, October 28th, 1890.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter I am commanded by the Queen to inform you that Her Majesty will be happy to become the Patron of the Berks Archæological Society, and to send you five pounds as a donation from the Queen to the Society.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

HENRY F. PONSONBY.

Meetings of the Society.

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The first meeting of the Society was held in its new quarters on October 29th, when Mr. G. W. Palmer presided, and a lecture was given by Mr. J. A. Brain on "The Legends and Ballads of Berks." The lecture embraced many stories connected with Reading in the olden time. The combat between Mountford and the Earl of Essex on the island below Caversham Bridge; the musical composition "Summer is y-comen in"; the story of Henry VIII. and the sick Abbot; and the amusing story of Cole, the rich clothier of Reading, were passed in review; while the ballads relating to Archbishop Laud, the "Reading fight," the famous "Archers of Newbury," "the Berkshire Lady" and the "Vicar of Bray," were read with great effect. Some of these ballads, which are least known, we hope to publish in these pages.

The Annual Meeting of the Society was held at the Abbey Gate on December 18th, Sir George Russell, Bart., M.P., the President, occupying the chair. The inclement weather prevented a large attendance. The report for the year was read, and, together with the balance sheet, was passed on the motion of Mr. Stallwood, seconded by Mr. Hurford. The officers for the ensuing year were elected; the list, together with the report, balance sheet and roll of members will be found incorporated in this number of the journal. An interesting demonstration on the Monumental Brasses of Berks was given by the Rev. J. E. Field, whose valuable papers on this subject were published in our pages a short time ago. Mr. Field's complete collection of rubbings of Berkshire brasses was shown; and the exhibition was left open to the public until after Christmas. Votes of thanks to the lecturer and chairman concluded the proceedings.

