

## Reviews.

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THE CHURCHWARDENS' ACCOUNTS OF THE PARISH OF ST. MARY'S, READING, BERKS, 1550-1662. TRANSCRIBED BY FRANCIS N. A. GARRY, M.A., AND A. G. GARRY. PREFACE BY THE LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD.—Edward J. Blackwell (Reading), Folio pp. 200. Price 12s. 6d.

This is a work of great historical importance, and all antiquarian scholars will feel grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Francis Garry for the zealous labours they have bestowed upon this valuable contribution to our knowledge of ecclesiastical, social and economic history. The task of transcribing so many pages of old writing has been no easy one, and we congratulate them most heartily upon the satisfactory completion of their labour of love. The volume possesses an additional attraction in having a learned and valuable preface from the pen of the Lord Bishop of Oxford. Admirers of the old town of Reading, students of the manners and customs of our forefathers, ecclesiastical historians, and all who love antiquity will here find matter for study and reflection. Our space forbids us at present from making extracts from the work; perhaps in another number we may be able to do greater justice to it; but in the mean time we would recommend all our readers to study the volume, and to take advantage of the store of knowledge and interest which is therein collected.

HOW TO DECIPHER AND STUDY OLD DOCUMENTS, BEING A GUIDE TO THE READING OF ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS, BY E. E. THOYTS, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY C. TRICE MARTIN, ASSISTANT KEEPER OF H.M. RECORDS. (Elliot Stock.)

This key to the family Deed Chest is extremely valuable to all whose vocation it is to study ancient MSS. Its author, Miss Thoyts, whose labours in the cause of Archæology in this County are well known, has had considerable experience in this work, and with much perseverance and endless patience has transcribed many a volume of crabbed old writing, monastic charters, and ancient deeds; she is therefore fully qualified to speak of the many difficulties which she has surmounted, and has kindly recorded her experience for the advantage of others who may follow in her steps. The various chapters deal with such recondite subjects as Law Latin, Law Technicalities, Manor and Court Rolls, Monastic Charters, Parish Books, and there are useful remarks on Old Letters and Abbreviations which so often puzzle less experienced students. It was a happy idea which inspired Miss Thoyts to write this work, for which many will be very grateful.

THE FIGHT ON THE ISLAND, OR READING ABBEY A.D. 1163. (Miss Langley, Reading.) The Author of "The Sack of Silchester," which many of our readers will remember, has woven a pleasing romance about the story of the famous wager of battle, fought between Henry, Earl of Essex, and Sir Roger de Montford. It has the great merit of historical accuracy and most faithfully delineates the manners and customs of the period. The archaic diction, the careful following of history, as well as the pleasing fancy of the writer, add great charm to his little work which only makes us long for more. We feel sure he could find many themes in the history of Reading upon which to found a romance which would be greatly appreciated by all who love the old town.