

Meetings of the Society.

A Meeting of the Society was held at the Museum, on October 24th, when Dr. Stevens, the Hon. Curator, gave a demonstration on some of the recent introductions to the Silchester Collection. A large number of Members were present.

Dr. STEVENS described the objects added to the Silchester Collection during the last six weeks or so, and took the occasion to point out that while the Britons undoubtedly derived a vast deal of art, law, agriculture, and other sciences from the Romans, there was a very considerable amount of British culture before the Roman invasion. The Romans did not colonise Britain in the same way that we had colonised Australia or America; but their influence on British civilization was rather to be compared with that which we are now exercising in India. Dr. Stevens showed and described a great number of bones of dogs, cats, the Celtic ox, the domestic pig and goat, tusks of the wild boar, remains of a small horse (which was only recently found running wild in the New Forest, and in Wales), and remains of the roebuck, the red deer and other animals that were hunted for food; exhibiting also many implements partly made from the horns of the latter. A British quern, found at Silchester, was shown, and Dr. Stevens traced the development of this simple appliance into the modern and complex flour mill, and many interesting remarks were made, and illustrated by samples, as to the Samian and British ware, the British coins (modelled on the Greek patterns), &c., specimens of which are to be seen in the Museum.

The Rev. Canon GARRY, Vice-President of the Society, proposed and Mr. T. H. White seconded a hearty vote of thanks to the honoured and eloquent Curator of the Museum, for his courtesy and for his interesting and luminous lecture.

After the demonstration, the Members of the Society were hospitably entertained, by the Mayor and Mrs. Field, to afternoon tea in the Committee Room of the Municipal Buildings.

We are happy to hear that Dr. Stevens has consented to continue his Curatorship of the Reading Museum. His resignation was received with widespread regret by all who were acquainted with his invaluable work, and the town of Reading is to be congratulated in having retained the services of so learned and indefatigable a Curator of its Museum.

On November 28th the Rev. Alan Cheales read a very interesting paper before the Society on "Seye and Sele of the XVII. Century," when Mr. H. B. Blandy presided. We understand that the paper will be published *in extenso*, and therefore it is unnecessary to record here the very graphic account of a distinguished scion of a distinguished family. The Lecturer was heartily thanked for his paper.

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Under the auspices of the University Extension College, several lectures on local history have been delivered by Mr. W. M. Childs. "The Abbey of Reading"; "The Guild Merchants of Reading and the Battle of Freedom"; "Elizabethan Reading"; "Berkshire and the Great Rebellion"; and "The Siege of Basing House" furnished the Lecturer with themes for his discourses, which, although they do not seem to have contained much that was new to local historians, doubtless were of some use to the University Extension students who were not acquainted with the history of the town and county.

