

Review.

HISTORY OF BRADFIELD COLLEGE, EDITED BY ARTHUR F. LEACH. (Henry Frowde, London). This famous school is a child of the nineteenth century and does not found its success upon the attractions of an historic past; but its wonderful growth has been watched with great interest by all Berkshire people, who have sorrowed with its sorrows and rejoiced with its joys and later triumphs. Its history, its misfortunes, its successes, are well known to many of our readers, and this volume contains an admirable account of the rise, growth and development of this famous school. The story is told with much clearness and humour and is very fascinating reading. All Bradfield men will revel in it, and many others who have no connection with the college. Antiquaries will be chiefly attracted to the chapter on Historic Bradfield. Its origin is Saxon, the name being the Broad-field. We question very much whether it was "one of the original sites of Abingdon Abbey." The charters of King Ini, upon which this notion is based, are not considered genuine. In Domesday William FitzAnsculf is recorded as the owner, and the manor was held at various times by the Pagnells, Somerys, De la Beches, Langfords, Staffords, Thompsons and Stevenses, and Bradfield was very likely the dower house of the Dudley family. The history of the manor is carefully traced, and is of great interest to students of Berkshire records. The author solves the mystery of the curious ruins near the church commonly called "Tom o' Bedlams Hole." They are the remains of three houses and an upper chamber or solar under one roof, adjoining the stables of the manor which were assigned to Joan, widow of Sir Thomas Langford, in 1380. "Tom's Hole" is actually the turret of this building, and the room was no hermit's cell, but probably a groom's chamber. One of the Staffords deserves ill of antiquaries by nearly killing Elias Ashmole for wanting to marry his mother, Lady Manwaring, but Ashmole accomplished his purpose secretly in London, and lived to repent of his bargain, as the antiquary was forced to add many matrimonial jars to his other collections of antique wares. Students of Grecian antiquities will turn with interest to the account of the Greek Play at Bradfield, where for the first time since the downfall of the Greek stage a Greek drama was produced under conditions exactly identical with those of ancient times. We congratulate the Editor on the production of this admirable history of a rising and distinguished school.