



The Berks, Bucks & Oxon Archæological Journal.

Gossip of an Antiquary.

New discoveries are always received with criticism and caution, and the collectors of Palæolithic and Neolithic flint implements have been somewhat startled on hearing that a yet earlier class of stone tools has been found, which the discoverers have termed Eoliths, or "tools of the early stone age." They have been received with much scepticism, and scornful things have been said about them ; and yet

"The novel doctrine may be right
In spite of cries of danger ;
The best yard dog will bark and bite,
Alike at every stranger."

The Rev. R. Ashington Bullen has written an able pamphlet on the subject of Eoliths, and told us all that has been found concerning them. The excellent plates are marvellously convincing. Seven years ago Mr. Shrubsole, of Reading, who is our great local authority on Flints, found several of a rude and primitive character between Easthampstead and Ash. The Berkshire types are 1, large implements with rounded butt ; 2, grooved or hollowed scrapers ; 3, fragments of flint worked at the point only. The existence of man in the Pliocene period is at least probable, and from henceforth we must add Eoliths to our collections.

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Mr. St. John Hope has completed his series of reproductions of the splendid enamelled and painted gilt metal stall plates of the

Knights of the Garter. To the antiquary, the herald, and the genealogist these stall plates are of special value, while as a chronological series of examples of armorial art they are unrivalled. The present volume, which will be issued immediately by Messrs. Constable & Co., covers the Plantagenet period (1348-1485). The stall plates are represented full-size and in colours, while each plate is accompanied by descriptive and explanatory letterpress of the seals of the Knights.

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I hear that we are about to enjoy a new work on the History of Reading Abbey. This will be welcome news to many of our readers, and we shall look forward with much pleasure to the issue of the work, upon which the author, Dr. Hurry, has bestowed much pains.

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Although England was full of monasteries it only gave birth to one English monastic order, the Gilbertines, founded by S. Gilbert, of Sempringham, in Lincolnshire. The history of this order and of its founder has just been written by Miss Rose Graham, (*S. Gilbert, of Sempringham and the Gilbertines, Elliot Stock*). S. Gilbert lived in the troublous times of Stephen, when in spite of wars and political confusion there was a great religious revival. He revived the double monastic system in which a society of "regular" priests ministered to the spiritual needs of "regular" women. The history of this order has never been written before, and Miss Graham has added a most valuable volume to our monastic literature, which should be carefully read by all who are interested in the study of the middle ages.

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Another monastic book is *Bermondsey: its Historic Memories and Associations*, by E. T. Clarke (Elliot Stock). Modern Bermondsey does not conjure up any ideas of historical memories or royal associations. Yet this part of London has had its day and played its part in the stately pageant of the times that are past. It owed its greatness to the famous Abbey, concerning which Mr. Clarke has much to say, though he has not exhausted all that could be said on the subject. The illustrations are especially valuable, several old prints and plans being reproduced. Mr. Clarke has done well to assist in rescuing from oblivion what Sir Walter Besant called the "Forgotten Monastery," not one stone of which now remains

upon another, and to revive the ancient glories of the "Westminster of South London."

Mr. Walter Money has increased the debt which antiquaries owe to him for all his zealous labours by transcribing from the original MS. in the Wood Library at Whitchurch, Hants, a royal Purveyance or record of the goods to be provided for the royal household whenever they should be required. It is called *A Perfect Booke of all the landes as well arable as pasture, meadows, wastes and waste grounds, &c., within the hundreds of Evenger, Chutlye, Kingsclere, Pastroe and Overton in the year 1575*. When the court removed from place to place purveyors were obliged to provide food for the royal household and had power to collect it from the estates in the neighbourhood of the court. This "Perfect Booke" tells how many geese or fat capons, or wheat or hens each person in each parish was obliged to provide. Hence there is in it a vast amount of information relating to these Hampshire places, and Mr. Money has much to say about the numerous families which are mentioned. There is a good index, and the volume will be found most useful to the students of Hampshire history.

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The Memorials of old Buckinghamshire is now in the press. Not the least interesting chapter is that by Mrs. Climensson on the famous relic of Reading Abbey, the "so-called uncorrupt hand of S. James," which throws fresh light on the strange stories connected therewith. Her account of Medmenham and its Monks is also full of interest. Lady Verney's chapter on Claydon is attractively written, and Mr. Summers' account of Milton's Homes, the Penn Family, and the Martyrs of Amersham, is well worthy of attention. The volume will have a list of subscribers, which will close shortly. The book will contain a large number of illustrations.

Proceedings of Societies.

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—On March 27th, the President, Mr. C. E. Keyser, gave an extremely interesting lecture on "The Tympana of Norman Doorways," illustrating it with a beautiful series of lantern slides and a unique collection of photographs of these curious carvings.