



The Berks, Bucks & Oxon Archæological Journal.

Gossip of an Antiquary.

With this number, the Archæological Journal for the Three Counties begins its Ninth Volume, and the Editor hopes that it may be especially useful in collecting information for the Victoria County History of Berks which is now in progress. The same series of County Histories will include those of Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire; and it would be well if those who are interested in Local Antiquities would begin to compile information with regard to those Counties, similar to that which is now sought for Berkshire.

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The Editor of the Berkshire Volumes is fortunate in having obtained the co-operation of several able and distinguished writers, without whose aid it would be impossible for him to carry out the immense undertaking, and he hopes that many other helpers will kindly volunteer their services, in order that every Parish may have a complete and accurate record. We shall endeavour to give an account of what has been done, and what is still required, in order to prevent the over-lapping of work and to give some directions to those who are willing to assist us.

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The arrangement of Parishes will be under the modern Hundreds of the County, and it is proposed that each Hundred should have its own correspondent who shall collect and compile all information relating to that Hundred. The Editor has been fortunate enough to secure the services of Mr. Harold Peake for the Hundreds of

Faircross and Kintbury-Eagle, the Rev. J. Footman for Faringdon, Shrivenham, and Lambourn, the Rev. J. E. Field for Morton, and Ock, Mr. F. Morland for Hormer, the Rev. W. O. Clinton for Theale, Miss Hayden for Wantage, Mr. L. Treacher for portions of Charlton, and Sonning; while individual Parishes have been taken up by several helpers. The Rev. H. F. Howard is compiling information relating to Catmore, the Rev. J. B. H. Whitehouse is doing the same for Farnborough, Canon Savory for Binfield, the Rev. H. Salwey for Easthampstead, the Rev. Austen Leigh for Wargrave, the Rev. B. Littlewood for Warfield, the Rev. H. Barnett for Bracknell, and Mr. Walter Money for Newbury. It will be observed that there are still several gaps in our County which we hope will soon be filled up by the kind co-operation of other helpers. If any of our readers can secure the assistance of someone to supply information with regard to some of those places which at present have no correspondent, they will be performing a great service to the cause.

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As regards the information required from our correspondents, it must not be supposed that we want them to write a complete history of their Parishes. The topographical history, the descents of the Manors, will be compiled from original sources of information, from documents in the Record Office, etc., which are being transcribed. All we want now is a little local enquiry which will enable the correspondent to reply to the queries printed below. They are not difficult or abstruse, but such that anyone with local knowledge and a little careful enquiry can satisfactorily answer.

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We cannot commend too highly the zeal and energy of one of our correspondents, Mr. Harold Peake, who is working in the Hundreds of Faircross and Kintbury-Eagle. He has started a MS. Journal for circulation amongst the ladies and gentlemen who are assisting him in that district, giving information upon difficult questions which sometimes perplex those who are unaccustomed to this kind of work, and affording a means of communication between his correspondents. Our grateful thanks are due to Mr. Peake for this admirable plan, and for all the energy he has thrown into the undertaking.

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Local correspondents are asked to obtain information concerning the following particular details in each Parish :—The physical situation

and acreage. Hamlets. Soil, minerals, stone quarries, sand or gravel pits, etc. Pasturage and arable—chief crops. Parks, commons, village greens. Roads and bridle paths. Railway station and when opened. Canals, ancient bridges, etc. Names of owners of land and their arms. Gentlemen's seats. Principal occupations, trades, etc. Folklore, games or customs. Field names, exceptional and of interest. Antiquities (not to be described). Historical references. Modern history of Manors. Court Rolls (place of deposit.) Fairs or markets. Enclosure award. Tithe map. Any buildings worth describing (only mention). Present patrons of the Living and their immediate predecessors. All monuments in the Church before 1550, mural ditto before 1770. Church Plate. Registers. Churchwardens' accounts, vestry minutes, etc. Charities. District Churches. Chantry Chapels. Nonconformist Chapels. Schools.

Proceedings of Societies.

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—On January 15th, a very interesting lecture illustrated by lantern slides was given by Mr. Peachy, of Brightwalton, on the "History of Book-Plates." He said a book-plate was a label, printed or engraved, heraldic or otherwise, which was intended to proclaim the ownership of a book when pasted inside its covers or added to its title or fly leaves. In short, it was a mark of possession. Sometimes it was called an "ex-libris," included many marks of ownership which were not, technically speaking, book-plates. The interest to be found in book-plates might vary according to the taste of the student or collector. Most of them had their hobby, and he certainly knew of none which, when seriously studied, appealed to so many instincts as did the collection of book-plates. And in introducing the subject that afternoon he was not without hope that his remarks might result in inducing some amongst them to become either students or collectors, and even to enrol themselves as members of the Ex Libris Society. To those of an