



The Berks, Bucks & Oxon Archæological Journal.

Gossip of an Antiquary.

The visit of the British Archæological Association to Reading will be hailed with much pleasure by the antiquarians of Berkshire, and much interest has been evinced in the programme of the proceedings. The Association was founded in 1843 for the purpose of investigating, preserving, and illustrating all ancient monuments of the history, manners, customs and arts of our forefathers, in furtherance of the principles of the Society of Antiquaries. It has had a long and interesting history, and the Annual Congress is a great feature of its active life. The Reading Congress will be the sixty-second, and we trust that all the inhabitants will do their utmost to make it a conspicuous success.

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The Mayor of Reading, M. J. Sutton, Esq., with his usual generous hospitality, will entertain the members to a conversazione at the Town Hall on the evening of the opening day, July 17th. The inaugural address will be given by the President of the Berks Archæological Society, Mr. Keyser, and the Scarlet Anglo-Viennese Band and the Westminster Singers will discourse sweet music for the delectation of the company. There will be daily Excursions, and the following places will be visited:—Silchester, Pamber, Padworth, Aldermaston, Upton Court, White Horse Hill, Wantage, Wallingford, Abingdon and Newbury. The Great Western Hotel will be the headquarters of the Congress, and Papers will be read each evening.

Congress Tickets admitting a gentleman and lady, or a lady, to all Meetings free, and to the Excursions at the same rates as the Members of the Association, may now be obtained from the Congress Secretary, C. J. WILLIAMS, Esq., 45, Birkenhead Avenue, Kingston-on-Thames, at the price of One Guinea each.

The following are the prices of the Tickets for each day's Excursion :—

Tuesday, July 18 ...	Silchester, 5/6.
Wednesday, July 19	Ashdown and Wantage, 8/6.
Thursday, July 20...	River Excursion Wallingford, 8/6.
Friday, July 21 ...	Abingdon, 7/6.
Saturday, July 22 ...	Newbury, 4/6.

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It was my privilege to be present at the famous historic pageant at Sherborne on June 13th, when the various scenes connected with the history of the old town were graphically represented by almost eight hundred performers. The stage was the inner court of the old Castle of Sherborne, the country seat of the Bishops of Salisbury. Twelve hundred years ago St. Ealdhem fixed the seat of the bishopric of the western or newer Wessex there, and had for his diocese the lands of Dorset and Somerset and the Malmesbury land of Wilts. In a short time Sherborne held the dignity of being the capital city of the west Saxon kingdom. The Conqueror moved the bishop's seat to Old Sarum. Many were the "episodes" in the play, recording scenes of its past glories, and author, poet, and townsfolk are to be congratulated on this wonderful presentment of historical events, and on the local patriotism which enabled them to so effectually carry out the enterprise.

Proceedings of Societies.

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—The annual meeting was held on May 4th, when the reports of the Society were read and the officers elected. The Principal of University College read a most interesting paper on "The Site of Early Reading." Mr. Childs said that there was no more interesting group of historical enquiries than those which tried to determine what was the original and ancient centre of an old seat of civilisation. He pointed out the necessity of exercising caution and of revising many received ideas relating to early occupa-