



Proceedings of Societies.

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—The First Meeting of the Winter Session was held at the Abbey Gate, on Friday, November 17th, at 3 p.m., when a very interesting lecture was given by J. Hauteville Cope, Esq., on "The History of the Ancient Priory of Herteley Wynteney."

The Second Meeting was held at the Abbey Gate, on Friday, December 15th, at 3 p.m., when a valuable lecture was given by Charles Ffoulkes, Esq., of Oxford, on "Armour on Monumental Effigies, XIII—XVI Century." The lecture was illustrated by an excellent series of lantern slides. Mr. Ffoulkes is the author of the important book on "Arms and Armour," and is recognised as one of the chief authorities on the subject. The Society was fortunate in having secured his kind services as a lecturer, and a large number of Members were present. Tea was provided after the Lecture by the kind invitation of the Rev. and Mrs. Morris Williams.

The following Lectures have been promised:—"On Ancient Costume," by Miss Swann, President of the Oxford Ladies' Archæological and Brass Rubbing Society; "On Old Gardens" by Mervyn Macartney, Esq., F.R.S.; "On some Berkshire Churches," by the President; "On Fountains," by E. Guy Dawber, Esq.; "On Parish Registers and Genealogy," by Mrs. Hauteville Cope.

NEWBURY AND DISTRICT FIELD CLUB.—EXCURSION TO TOM HUGHES' COUNTRY.—UFFINGTON, KINGSTON LISLE, WHITE HORSE HILL, WAYLEN SMITH'S CAVE, DONNINGTON PRIORY.—The members of the Newbury and District Field Club devoted Tuesday, September 12th, to an excursion of local interest, all the places visited being closely identified with the life and writings of the eminent author of "Tom Brown's School Days," whose books possess an enduring charm for dwellers in the county of Berks. Mr. Walter Money had kindly prepared some notes on the places visited, and this contributed much to the enjoyment and entertainment of the members. Leaving Newbury at 8.30 a.m., a party of some thirty travelled via Didcot to Uffington, and thence in carriages to the church. Uffington, usually connected with Uffa, King of the Saxons, who gained it in 780, by the conquest of Kinewulf, King of the Mercians, is minutely described in the opening chapters of "Tom Brown's School Days." Here, in the quiet old-fashioned country village, under the shadow of the everlasting hills, Tom Brown was reared, and never left it till he first went to school when nearly eight years of age—"born and bred," says he, "a west-countryman, thank God! a Wessex man, a citizen of the noblest Saxon Kingdom of Wessex, a regular 'Angular Saxon,' the very soul of 'the adscriptus glebæ.'" This connection of Tom Hughes's family with Uffington arose from the marriage of the Rev. Thomas Hughes, D.D., preceptor in the royal family of George III, subsequently canon residentiary of St. Paul's and one of the Clerks of the Closet to George III and George IV, with Mary Anne, daughter and heiress of the Rev. George Watts, vicar of Uffington, and

grand-daughter of the Rev. George Watts, chaplain to George II. and Master of the Temple Church. By this lady Dr. Hughes who, with his other preferences was vicar of Uffington, had an only son, the late John Hughes, of Donnington Priory, the father of "Tom," who was born at Uffington, 19th October, 1822, and whose maternal great-grandmother was daughter and heiress of Richard Head Esq., descendant and representative of the Mr. Head mentioned in the "History of Newbury" as the host of Lord Falkland before the battle, with whom he received the sacrament in the old room still existing in "Chepe" Street, now vulgarised into "Cheap" Street. Old "Madame" Hughes, as she was called, an accomplished musician and singer, the grandmother of "Tom," was the friend and correspondent of the Rev. Richard Harris Barham, author of "The Ingoldsby Legends." It was to this lady and her son, John Hughes, that he was indebted for many old legends and anecdotes that formed the groundwork of several of the effusions with which this delightful book abounds, including that of "Hamilton Tighe," whose real name was Hampden Pye, and who lived at Faringdon before he went to sea. The witty Canon often visited Mrs. Hughes, of Uffington, and numerous interesting letters which passed between them on literary and other subjects will be found in "The Life of the Rev. R. H. Barham," written by his son. In one of these characteristic epistles, containing an acknowledgment of a present from Mrs. Hughes—annually repeated—of one of those beguiling Berkshire delicacies so fraught with peril to the inexperienced or unwary, the author of the "Legends" thus humorously opens his letter of thanks :—

"My dear Madam,—I know not how to thank you. Rude I am in speech and manner ; never till this hour Tasted I such a dainty !"
But young Norval never had such a "pig's head" to be thankful for ; it is truly delicious—almost too much so indeed, for it tempted me last night to do what I very seldom do, and never ought to do : viz., eat a hearty supper ; the consequence was that I "dreamt of the d—l, and awoke in a fright" :—

"Methought I was seated at church,
With Wellington acting as clerk,
And there in a pew,
Was Rothschild the Jew
Dancing a jig with Judge Park ;
Lady Morgan sat playing at the organ,
While behind the vestry-door,
Horace Twiss was snatching a kiss
From the lips of Hannah More."

Dr. Hughes was a great friend of Sir Walter Scott, whose genius has cast such a widespread interest over the Vale of the White Horse, and it was in his company, and that of his son John Hughes, afterwards of Donnington Priory, then only a lad, the "Wizard of the North" visited the White Horse Hill, Wayland Smith's Cave, and other antiquities in the neighbourhood, when he called on Mr. William Brown, of Kingston Winslow. This interesting incident was related to the writer by the late Mr. William Brown Baker, J.P., who with a friend, Eyles, of Newbury, afterwards Captain Eyles, was staying in the house at the time, and well remembered the circumstance. Sir Walter, while in Berkshire, also called on Dr. Slatter, then Rector of Cumnor, the father of the late Canon Slatter, to whom he was indebted for many local details concerning the old house, which he recollected before any part of the building was taken down. Mr. Brown Baker, who came of an old Berkshire family long settled at

Wantage, was born at Abingdon in 1799, and was in his 94th year when he died at Southampton in 1893. Miss Mitford, one of the most charming of prose writers, gives an interesting notice of her friend John Hughes, of Donnington Priory, in her "Recollections of a Literary Life," where she asks "Was not his 'Provence and the Rhone' almost the only work ever praised in the Waverley Novels?" and adds, "Mr. Hughes was honoured with the acquaintance of Sir Walter Scott, and amongst the most valued treasures of the Priory is the last portrait ever taken of the great novelist. The writer of these notes has a vivid recollection of Miss Mitford when she visited the Priory, and can well recall the stately old world courtesy with which "Pater Hughes" conducted the quaint little old lady to his pew in Shaw Church. Miss Mitford, who describes her friend John Hughes, the editor of the "Boscobel Tracts," as one who united the most careful historical research with the rarer power which holds attention fixed upon the page, possessing a fine old house at Donnington, and having a good deal of the old Cavalier feeling in his own character, felt an interest, almost personal in the old castle and the historic incidents with which it was associated. He took the authoress of "Our Village" over the battle-fields, Donnington Castle, and Shaw House, with which she was delighted, "being free alike from any symptom of decay or any token of modern renovation, which does honour to Mr. Eyre, its present possessor." Highclere was also visited, of which an amusing description is given, and in an appreciation of Mr. Hughes, Miss Mitford says: "To say nothing of the classical learning for which he has always been renowned, a scholar amongst scholars; does he not write and talk as a native nearly all the languages of Europe, all certainly that have a literature to tempt the acquirement?" Mr. Hughes took a great interest in local affairs, and was appointed a J.P. for the county in 1822, and a Deputy-Lieutenant in 1852. After leaving the Priory he resided at 7, the Boltons, Brompton. Mr. Hughes married in 1820, Margaret Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Wilkinson, Esq., of Stokesley Hall, co. York, and by her had issue—George Edward, D.C.L., b. 1821; Thomas (author of "Tom Brown's School Days"), b. 1822; John, b. 1824, for many years Vicar of Longcot; William Hastings, b. 1833; Henry Salusbury, b. 1836; Arthur Octavius; and Jane Elizabeth, b. 1848, who married Nassau John Senior, M.A., barrister-at-law.

(To be continued.)

