

“THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE MISCELLANY.”

MR. ROBERT GIBBS, F.S.A., has just completed “The Buckinghamshire Miscellany,”* his last contribution to the history, topography, and archaeology of the county. The undertaking could only have been accomplished by one who had familiarised himself with the best authorities on subjects associated with the locality as wide as they are interesting.

The Miscellany does not profess to do more than to give concise extracts from the writings of those who have made Buckinghamshire more or less their study in connection with those branches of knowledge we have indicated. These extracts, however, are of this importance, that they bring before the reader facts which it would have been difficult to have ascertained without, probably, laborious research, and they quicken the desire for further investigation.

Without enumerating the living authors from whose works extracts have been made, although it should be remarked that Mr. Gibbs has himself contributed valuable articles to his book, it will be sufficient evidence of the wide range of the subjects introduced to refer to some of the authors whose volumes have been consulted. Leland, Camden, Dugdale, Lysons, and Browne Willis are among the authorities from whom quotations are given, whilst among the writers of local reputation we have contributions from Langley, Lipscomb, Lord Nugent, Admiral Smyth, and the Rev. W. Hastings Kelke. It will thus be seen that Mr. Gibbs has the merit of collecting together articles from the works of those who have been best acquainted with Buckinghamshire, whether as historians or archaeologists.

It would be difficult in a brief notice of the Miscellany to select from so varied a collection of papers those

* “The Buckinghamshire Miscellany,” a series of concise and interesting articles, illustrative of the history, topography, and archaeology of the county of Buckinghamshire. Compiled and edited by Robert Gibbs, F.S.A. Aylesbury, 1891.

which would claim special notice. The names of the gentry of the county returned by the Commissioners in the twelfth year of Henry VI. will probably afford the most genuine interest to those who can claim Buckinghamshire as the home of their ancestors, and who still retain their association with the county. But the article on the "Families and Heraldry of Buckinghamshire," by Dr. F. G. Lee, with the list of armorial bearings, collected by the author, gives important information, and, indeed, contains an original compilation of much value, which it would have been an omission not to have noticed.

The author in a note tells the reader thus gracefully that the paper was specially prepared and offered as "a small acknowledgment of the services to archæology and antiquities, both literary and practical, which have long been rendered to the county by the compiler and editor of 'The Buckinghamshire Miscellany.'"

We cannot, however, pass over the article of Mr. E. J. Payne, on Buckinghamshire Etymology. It is but a small instalment of that which we may justly expect from him on a subject which he has shown himself very capable of elucidating, and which must be intensely interesting to those who are making a study of the races who have bequeathed to us the names of the hills and plains, the rivers and homesteads of this county. The paper is as suggestive as it is instructive. It may, in dealing with the origin of the different names alluded to, be open to criticism, but it is ably written, and its perusal cannot fail to lead to further investigation from the archæologist who is giving to the origin of topographical names his special attention.

If we take a general survey of the information contained in the work before us, we are led, in reading the short and varied papers presented to us, to adopt an illustration such as this. We are taken rapidly through a range of country to which we are attached by many associations; we mark a church tower here, a manor-house there, a crumbling priory on one side, or a market cross on another. We should probably like to linger at each object of interest, but we are moving on; yet we resolve some day to make a halt at each spot on which our eyes have rested. This is the feeling we experience as we close the pages of Mr. Gibbs's volume.—Ed.