



The Quarterly Journal

OF THE

Berks Archæological and Architectural Society.



WE have much pleasure in recording the fact, which has been already announced in the press, that Her Majesty the Queen has consented to become a Patron of our Society. This gracious act of Her Majesty has been welcomed with enthusiasm by our members, and especially by the inhabitants of the town of Reading, the head-quarters of our Society. It is fitting that that Association, which is engaged in the study of the antiquities of the Royal County, should have as its Patron Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, whose royal castle of Windsor, for centuries the abode of the Kings and Queens of England, lies within the borders of our sphere of operations. The Queen has ever shewn herself to be a willing promoter and patron of all branches of learning and research, and her act of condescension to our Society will be an incentive to all its members to increased exertions in carrying out the objects for which it was constituted. The past year was a fitting time for the Society to receive so high an honour, as in 1890 it celebrated its jubilee, having been founded in the year 1840 under the title of the Berks Ashmolean Society. The history

of the Society shows it has in no small degree contributed by its publications and meetings to promote the study of local history and antiquities in the county, and we trust that it will long continue to carry on its useful mission. The following is the letter which has been received by the officers of the Society from the Queen's secretary :—

Balmoral, October 28th, 1890.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter I am commanded by the Queen to inform you that Her Majesty will be happy to become the Patron of the Berks Archæological Society, and to send you five pounds as a donation from the Queen to the Society.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

HENRY F. PONSONBY.

Meetings of the Society.

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The first meeting of the Society was held in its new quarters on October 29th, when Mr. G. W. Palmer presided, and a lecture was given by Mr. J. A. Brain on "The Legends and Ballads of Berks." The lecture embraced many stories connected with Reading in the olden time. The combat between Mountford and the Earl of Essex on the island below Caversham Bridge; the musical composition "Summer is y-comen in"; the story of Henry VIII. and the sick Abbot; and the amusing story of Cole, the rich clothier of Reading, were passed in review; while the ballads relating to Archbishop Laud, the "Reading fight," the famous "Archers of Newbury," "the Berkshire Lady" and the "Vicar of Bray," were read with great effect. Some of these ballads, which are least known, we hope to publish in these pages.