

Church News, Notes and Queries, and Correspondence

This is a collection of items which appeared in '*Church Bells*' on pages other than the designated '*Bells and Bell Ringing*' section. They vary from the learned to the bizarre, and are presented in approximate date order of publication.

SIR,—Can any of your readers help me to texts or mottoes suitable for a Ringing Chamber? I have but two, viz. the last stanza of Keble's 'Church Bells,' and the following,—
‘Who rings a bell let him look well
To hand, and head, and heart;
The hand for work, the head for wit,
The heart for worship's part.’
I presume that zinc is as good a material as any on which to have mottoes painted.
I am, &c. W. WIGRAM.

Published: 14.i.1871

SIR,—I should be much obliged if you or some of your correspondents would inform me why it is the custom in most parishes to ring the church-bells at eight and nine o'clock on the mornings of Sundays and the great Festivals? Was it originally rung to summon the people to an early celebration and to matins? And was it through their non-appearance that all the services were pressed in at eleven o'clock?—
IGNORAMUS.

Published: 14.i.1871

DEDICATION TO SACRED OFFICES.

SIR,—Many years since, I ventured in an anonymous work (*Church Orders*, Macintosh) to suggest that every person holding any function, charge, or duty within the house of God, ought to be set solemnly apart to that duty. Will our great Bell champion (the Rev. T. Ellacombe) tell me whether he has known any such plan adopted amongst bell-ringers? I believe the plan is adopted in a few places with the members of a church choir.
PRESBYTER.

Published: 28.i.1871

SIR,—Can any of your Correspondents tell me if there are any publishers of Music for Handbell-ringers? If so, who are they, and what is the cost per tune?
CAMPANOLOGIAN.

Published: 18.iii.1871

Music for Hand-Bells.

In reply to 'Campanologist,' no special music is published, but if he will write to Mr. William Bannister, at the Royal Dockyard, Devonport, or Mr. Miller, 53 Richmond Terrace, Clapham Road, S.W. (inclosing stamps to cover postage), he will probably obtain what he inquires about.
C.

Published: 1.v.1871

Gross Abuses of Bell-ringing.

SIR,—The *Standard* says that the Church of St. Mary's, Reading, rang out a merry peal to celebrate the victory of Churchmen over Dissenters in the election of the School Board. If Reading Churchmen know not what is due to themselves in the way of self-respect and charity, they might at least consider that church bells are essentially for religious purposes, and that it is a mere prostitution of their use to make them the means of proclaiming a victory in a religious feud arising out of Parliamentary legislation. Perhaps the most charitable construction to put upon it is, that the Vicar could not be aware that the belfry key was in his keeping, and that the ringers were glad of any opportunity of displaying their proficiency.
A LONDON LAYMAN.

Published (in 'Bells and Bell Ringing') 15.iv.1871

As particularly interested in questions relating to Church Bells, we are bound to notice that the vestry of Bridgewater has lately had occasion to reprimand the sexton of that parish for allowing the church bells to be rung in honour of the failure of legal proceedings taken against a local publican for illegal sale of liquor. The action of the vestry is, of course, to be commended, and the conduct which called for it deplored. Church bells are, unfortunately, too much used for illegitimate purposes all over the country; and, we may add, too much associated, in many places, with beer-drinking. Better far that all church bells should be evermore silent, than that they should continue to ring out at the price of scandal to the Church, and be connected in people's minds with the triumphs of public-houses. In this feeling we are assured that we have our readers with us.

Published: 22.iv.1871

In reply to Mr. Wigram's query, as to the best material on which to inscribe mottoes, I would say that zinc is not so good as *slate* or *mahogany*, zinc being seriously affected by some atmospheres. Lines suitable for mottoes for a ringing-chamber will be found in the column on Bell-ringing.
C.

Published: 21.i.1871

In answer to a question by 'Ignoramus,' in No. 3, where Bells are rung on Sunday and festival mornings, it is in honour of the day, but they should be rung before 8 o'clock.

If he alludes to a single bell at 8 or 9 o'clock, that is a relic of the *Angelus*, formerly rung every morning, noon, and evening.

Published: 21.i.1871

See also 'Bells and Bell Ringing' on 11.ii.1871

SIR,—Rev. George Richards is seeking a *practical* treatise or tract upon Bell-ringing, from which the ringing of *Changes* could be learned, and would be very glad of information.
Tyldesley Parsonage, Manchester.

Published 25.ii.1871

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R. P. (Bratton) suggests that a page of 'CHURCH BELLS' be given to 'Choirs and Singing,' or else great jealousy will arise between ringers and singers; and T. N. S. (Redcliffe) advises a weekly chapter on 'Choirs and Choir-singing.' We would gladly adopt the suggestion if we had space, but we have not; and, moreover, there are, we believe, several small-priced musical publications, published weekly, while there is not any other serial that gives prominence to the interests of the belfry.

Published: 8.iv.1871

SIR,—My attention has just been called to a paragraph in 'CHURCH BELLS' headed 'Gross Abuses of Bell-ringing,' and signed 'A London Layman.'

The writer thereof refers to what the *Standard* says, and proceeds to make some very harsh comments on me in consequence. I beg to inform him that I am not responsible for what 'the *Standard* says,' but for what I say and do myself. And had 'A London Layman' taken the trouble to inquire, he might have learned that at the official declaration of the poll I expressly repudiated the notion that the Church bells of St. Mary's had ever been rung for party purposes, either at this election or at any other during my incumbency; stating on the contrary, that I considered that the moment an election was over all party feeling had ceased, and that the successful candidate should be welcomed as the chosen of the town. On the occasion alluded to, I gave permission for the bells to be rung in the afternoon, before the result of the contest was known, and said, 'I wish the bells to be rung whether Churchmen are successful or not.'

Such hasty and uncharitable letters as that of 'A London Layman' can do no good, and may do harm by spreading a calumny which it is difficult as widely to contradict.
A. P. R. CURR.

Published: 29.iv.1871

SIR,—I have just read in 'CHURCH BELLS,' with much surprise, that the bells of our parish church have been rung in honour of the failure of legal proceedings against a publican for illegal sale of liquor. A similar statement, I believe, got into the *Standard*; will you permit me to state that no such thing has occurred in Bridgewater? I have heard, however, with great regret, that something of the kind took place about three weeks ago in a neighbouring village. Perhaps you would kindly insert this correction in your next issue.
Lonsdale House, Bridgewater.
W. H. AXFORD.

Published: 6.v.1871

FEEDLE as our voice may be, we feel it to be a duty we owe to the public, and our ringing friends in particular, to denounce at once the ill-grounded aspersions cast upon the bells and belfries of England, in an article published in the April number of the *Contemporary Review*. The writer confesses that he has 'no deep architectural knowledge,' and he has, by his remarks, published to the world his thorough ignorance of English bells and belfries, and that he knew nothing of the art of ringing, or the science of changes. Admitting the truth that the staircases in many of our towers are in a very dilapidated state, and require reparation, and that dust and dirt are abundant, through the negligence of those whose duty it is to attend to such matters, and that where proper change-ringing is not practised the bells and their appurtenances are oftentimes in a disgraceful state of neglect, and that the ringing of the bells is a work of great labour, still, if he had witnessed the ease and pleasure with which a clever band of scientific ringers handle the ropes (either in London, the Midlands, or the North of England), ringing a peal of 5040 or more changes, standing in one position full three hours, sometimes longer, if more changes are struck, we believe the opinion of the writer of that article would have been expressed in a very different way.

We trust our readers who may be beginners in the art and mysteries of change-ringing as practised in England—and in England only with any efficacy—will not be misled by the writer's strictures and unjust remarks. He advocates carillons instead, as in Belgium, and prefers chimies to ringing; but that is not the general feeling among Englishmen, and we trust the day is far distant when the swinging of our glorious bells will become unpopular, and be a thing of the past.

He also finds great fault with the bells he has examined in our towers, that they are coarse castings, and are covered with 'rust;' but bells, being of copper and tin, or bronze metal, cannot 'rust' like iron. They may and do get oxidated, as all bronze articles do, adding greatly to their beauty; and it is that very oxidation which is supposed to improve the tone as bells get older. We have handled thousands of bells, but cannot recollect ever seeing one 'with bits of iron and rough metal sticking to them from the mould.' On the contrary, the founders of the present day are noted for turning out cleaner castings than the old founders ever did, owing to their superior machinery.

We thank the writer for recommending the introduction of carillons, which are very desirable where funds can be found, and where the inhabitants of a town like that sort of music; but before he makes another attack upon the bells and belfries of Old England, we hope he will learn to be a practical ringer, and then the probability is that he will alter his tone of censure to unbounded praise and delight.

H. T. F.

Published: 29.iv.1871

MUSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

SIR,—Pray 'think twice' before you act on the suggestion of 'S. M. C.' and 'A. F. S. H.' If you take to publishing original music, I for one shall think twice before I renew my subscription. What possible parallel can be drawn between your giving a page to bell-ringing, a wholly neglected branch of Church-work, and publishing 'original musical compositions'? I do not think the prospect of an increased circulation, obtained by gratifying the vanity of some who desire their effusions in print, will tempt your wisdom into so false a step.

C. E. G. C.

Published: 17.vi.1871

SURELY it would be impossible for 'CHURCH BELLS' to admit musical compositions, as has been suggested by one or two correspondents, without increasing the price of the issue, as the pages are already full to overflowing; besides it would be infringing unnecessarily on other periodicals which are exclusively devoted to such contributions.

A PSALM SINGER.

Published 24.vi.1871

MUSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

SIR,—I am much surprised at the letter of 'C. E. G. C.' in your last issue begrudging a small portion of 'CHURCH BELLS' to those who take an interest in music other than that issuing from our belfries. I did not understand that the two correspondents referred to proposed to omit the page of slang terms—such as, 'going in quick work,' 'dodging,' 'lie the pull behind,' &c. &c., which must be quite unintelligible, and probably not at all interesting, to the majority of your readers,—but an addition in the shape of music which very many can now understand. Probably the reference to bell-ringing as 'Church-work' was intended as a joke: a column or so might have been advocated for the beadle and organ-blower. I sincerely hope you will think of the suggestion again; and if the risk is not too great in losing the subscription of 'C. E. G. C.', gratify very many of your present subscribers, and without doubt attract very many others, and much more than cover the extra expense. C. T.

Published 24.vi.1871

HOLBECK, LEEDS.—ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH.—A vestry meeting was held on Friday, the 19th ult., to consider Mr. Woodhouse's offer of a peal of bells to this church. The Rev. J. H. F. Kendall occupied the chair, and explained at considerable length the munificent offer. The gist of his remarks was that Mr. Woodhouse would place a superior peal of bells (tenor, 20 cwt.) in the tower of the church, provided the sum of 500l. could be raised to form a permanent fund to pay the ringers. The Chairman also read a letter which he had received from the Bishop of Ripon, in which his lordship said he 'sanctioned with the utmost readiness your acceptance of Mr. Woodhouse's liberal gift to your church.' There was a numerous attendance, and the working men of the township mustered in large force. The meeting was addressed by Mr. J. N. Horsfield (Wesleyan), who strongly urged all sects and parties to aid in the movement, and thus secure the success of the undertaking, which, when accomplished, would, he said, be a credit to the township.

Published: 3.vi.1871

MUSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO 'CHURCH BELLS.'

SIR,—Will you allow me to suggest a plan for more widely setting 'CHURCH BELLS' into circulation?

A considerable space I see is already devoted to the study of the art of Bell-ringing. Now, there are a great many more musicians than bell-ringers, who would be likely to become subscribers if a certain space could be set aside for musical contributions, in the shape of hymn tunes, chants, kyries, &c., and occasionally a short anthem.

This idea has not originated with me. A Church paper entitled *The Orb*, which ceased to exist in the year 1867, adopted this plan; and several good Church musicians were in the habit of sending their compositions for insertion.

S. M. C.

Published: 27.v.1871

MUSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

SIR,—Allow me to second the proposal of 'S. M. C.' in your last number on 'Musical Contributions to "CHURCH BELLS."' It may be stated as an objection to their insertion, that the musical world is not

large enough to claim for itself a page of your paper; but I would answer, that the belfry world is quite as limited; and since you find space for numerous productions, in which terms like 'Bob Major,' 'Singles,' 'Hunting,' occur, and others equally incomprehensible to those who have not spent much of their time in the belfry, so you might be able to insert specimens of simple Church music, as very aptly suggested by S. M. C. And there are many to whom the very sight of a stave interspersed with minims and crotchets has a charm, who will probably, for the future, be among the first to procure copies of a paper in which these meet their eye. I hope that you will think twice of this suggestion.

A. F. S. H.

Published: 10.vi.1871

MUSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

SIR,—I regret that, with a view of saving your space, I compressed my protest against your admitting 'original musical compositions' into eight lines. I hope you will allow me to explain myself more at length.

I may premise that I called bell-ringing a branch of Church-work most seriously, believing myself fully justified by the numerous letters which you have published on the work many clergymen have found to do in their belfries. Surely it is 'Church-work' to call the people to church, as much as to play the organ when they are there, when both are done to the glory of God.

I take it that you undertook to give a page to bell-ringing, in the belief that belfries need the reformer's hand, and because the somewhat abstruse art of ringing has no proper organ. I doubt not that if organ-blowing, which 'C. T.' cites, were an intricate and also a neglected art, or gave opportunities for scandalous misbehaviour, you would have given space for its elucidation or its reformation. I repeat, then, that there is no necessary parallel between your drawing special attention to *Bells and Bell-ringing*, and treating, otherwise than incidentally, other branches of music. Let 'Church-choir people' read Church-choir papers, and not seek to thrust their peculiar wishes upon a paper of general Church news, which is incidentally the organ of the belfry. Here is no question of the relative merits of bell-ringing and other kinds of music. The terminology of the former is certainly uninteresting to the uninitiated, of whom I am one; but I apprehend that the original musical compositions of young organists and national schoolmasters would be equally so, even to most musical persons; nor is there any special reason for their insertion in your paper, when, as 'A Psalm Singer' says, there are other periodicals devoted to such contributions.

As for the addition to your circulation, I venture to believe that you would lose quite as many subscribers *in posse*, as you would gain, when you had acquired the reputation of publishing, for no particular reason but that of extending your circulation, and gratifying a section of your subscribers, musical compositions of no extraordinary merit.

What, again, of the disproportionate space which musical type would occupy in your columns?

C. E. G. C.

Published: 1. vii.1871

SIR,—Your correspondent 'C. E. G. C.' inquires what parallel there is between your giving a page to bell-ringing and publishing original musical compositions. I hope the following explanation will gratify him: In every parish church where there is a peal of bells there exists, generally speaking, a choir; and as a rule its members far exceed the number of bell-ringers of the said church; consequently, to those church-choir people who read your paper, an additional interest would be created by the admittance of musical contributions into its columns. Again, there are a number of young church musicians who cannot afford to publish their compositions (those, for instance, who as young organists only receive a stipend of some 20l. a-year; or, again, National schoolmasters who are musical) would be glad to have their compositions in print for various reasons; your paper would thus obtain an additional circulation amongst the class of people I have alluded to. A page on the study of bell-ringing is about as uninteresting to us musical people who subscribe to 'CHURCH BELLS' as can well be imagined. As for your correspondent's thinking that it would stir up a spirit of vanity in those people who send their music for insertion, let me inform him that musical people are not quite so vain as he imagines them to be. S. M. C.

Published 24.vi.1871

SIR,—As a lover of bells, and an old ringer, I beg leave to protest against the contemptuous remarks of 'C.T.' in to-day's issue of 'CHURCH BELLS,' calling the terms used in ringing 'slang'! Why, they are no more 'slang' than Sol-fa-la, &c. in music, which are quite as 'unintelligible' and 'uninteresting' to those who know nothing about music, as the technical terms used in ringing may be to those who do not understand them.

And as for his thinking it 'a joke' to call bell-ringing 'Church-work,' he might as well say that a steepie is no part of a church—and, perhaps, in his mistaken view, he looks upon it as such; and if so, it is to be feared he has not much reverence for what the steepie may contain.

If 'C.T.' has the abilities of a wrangler, and will go into the subject, he will soon find that the science of changes is deeper than he expected—perhaps than he can fathom; and that it is much easier for one of inferior abilities to be a proficient in music than in the mysteries of change-ringing.

FABIAN STEADMAN.

Published: 1. vii. 1871

MUSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

SIR,—I have been asked, by one whose opinion claims respect, to reply to 'C.T.' Personally, I would have preferred to leave an anonymous letter unnoticed.

No one can explain an art without using the terms which belong to it; and if he has to explain it from the very beginning, he is obliged to write at considerable length. I have left no technical expression unexplained, and, therefore, none unintelligible.

I define 'slang' to be a use of language in a manner improper or ungrammatical; especially the use of technical terms out of place. No tested, change-ringing need not fear comparison with music. In all my pages what is so truly 'slang' as the expression, 'To sol-fa a piece of music?' Will any schoolmaster, musical or otherwise, parse that sentence?

The technical terms of the choir outnumber those of the belfry manifold. What can be less intelligible to the uninitiated than such words as 'semiquaver,' 'the leading note,' 'the sub-dominant,' 'an inverted interval,' 'a pluperfect fourth,' and a host of others? What less interesting to the unmusical than a musical discussion?

Now let me protest most strenuously against that temper, most truly unecatholic, which allows a man to think that his favourite art cannot take its true place except at the expense of another, and which makes him sneer at the utility of that which he does not understand. The ringers and the tower have a place in the Church, and in her work, as real as that of the choir and of the organ.

It may comfort some of your correspondents to know that I have more than half finished: and while my writings are yet inflicted on them, perhaps they will ponder over two questions:—Has your paper room for everything at once? Are musical people without resource, even if you decide to decline their compositions?

W. WIGRAM.

Published: 8.vii.1871

*** THE Editor hopes the little controversy of Bell-ringing v. Choir-music has not been without its use. It has confirmed his own impression of the value of the somewhat abstruse page of 'CHURCH BELLS' which is under Mr. Ellacombe's able direction; for it has shown that there are clergy who have yet to learn that Bell-ringing is true Church-work; and who, learning this, may not be satisfied to have unshaven, slovenly fellows, slipping out of the Belfry instead of attending the service to which they have summoned their neighbours. There has hitherto been no special organ for Bell-ringers, and yet there is a belfry, larger or smaller, in every parish. And we hope that in time 'CHURCH BELLS' may find readers in many of these; for it is remarkable what enthusiasm about bells and all that pertains to them is found to exist in the breast of many a man otherwise illiterate, and this enthusiasm ought by all means to be encouraged.

As regards Choir-music, the fact that there are other weekly papers which give space to the musical contributions of their subscribers seems a sound reason for not adding this as a special permanent feature of 'CHURCH BELLS'; but the discussion of matters affecting choirs, either in their moral or musical aspects, may well be admitted, and we should be glad of such co-operation. The experience of the musical Editor of the defunct *Orb* and of other correspondents is adverse to the encouragement of musical contributions; but there need be no rule forbidding the occasional insertion of any notable composition which may be offered and may approve itself to the judgment of our co-workers who are versed in Church music.

Published: 15.vii.1871

Hexham Bells.

SIR,—Referring to your article upon Hexham Minster at page 110 of your issue of the 5th inst., as I have a perfect copy of their inscriptions, I give them below; they were all inscribed in Gothic capitals:—

Treble + AD: PRIMOS: CANTVS: PVLSAT: NOS: REX: GIORIOVS:
2nd + ET: CANTARE: GRATA: FACIET: NOS: VOX: NICHOIAI:
3rd + EST: NODIS: DIGNA: KATERINE: VOX: DENIGNA:
4th + OMNIBVS: IN: ANNIS: EST: VOX: DEO: GRATA: IOHANNIS:
A: D: M: CCCC: IIII:
5th + ANDREA: MI: CARO: IOHANNE: CONSOCAET: A: D: M: CCCC: IIII:
Tenor + EST: MEA: VOX: GRATA: DVX: SIM: MARIA: VOCATA:
A: D: M: CCCC: IIII:

The 5th was called 'St. Andrew's, or the Holy Bell for Funerals,' and the tenor, the 'Fray Bell.' The tenor, said to have weighed 70 cwt., was broken by ringing at the marriage of Sir William Blackett. The whole ring was taken down in 1742, and cast into a ring of eight the same year by Thomas Lester of Whitechapel, London, with a tenor of 21 cwt.: one bell was afterwards recast about 1823. The 'Fray Bell' alone would have outweighed the present entire ring.

JNO. HANAIS.

[The 'Fray Bell' was never rung alone but on occasion of fire, or on the approach of an enemy, to raise the *posse comitatus*, or 'fray,' as it was called. See more about these bells in Wright's *History of Hexham*, 1823, as we have not yet opened our columns to the archaeology of bells, leaving such to the pages of our good friend *Notes and Queries*.—ED.]

Published: 12.ii.1876

SIR,—Though not myself capable of composing a bar of music, I entirely agree with the sensible letter of 'S.M.C.' in this week's 'CHURCH BELLS.' No doubt the task of the musical editor would be sometimes invidious, and otherwise difficult; but no doubt the thing might be done. I always thought it a good feature in *The Orb*, to which paper reference has been already made.

Perhaps your bell-ringing columns will occasionally be enriched by new and original contributions from some of our greatest composers for the belfry—such, for instance, as Mr. Sottanstell of Sowerby, or Mr. Barker of Liversedge, who may find it a convenient means of publication.

J. T. F.

Published: 1. vii. 1871

SIR,—Your kindness in allowing communications on the question of musical contributions occasionally appearing in your columns, is, I hope, appreciated by advocates on both sides. They are so brief, fair, and to the point, that good must result. Allow another correspondent to add a few words.

Exhibitions of vanity on the part of amateurs contributing would most easily be kept in check by a competent musical editor. There could be no infringement on other musical periodicals already existing, for the doors of such are said to be opened only by the golden key of powerful trade interest, or by some Onseley, or Elvey, or Wesley, standing A 1 in the musical world.

And then, with respect to numbers preferring music to bell-ringing, allow that, in rural districts, they are about equally matched, it will not, I think, be denied, that they decidedly form a large majority in those which are manufacturing. The neighbourhood in which I live will very clearly illustrate, and, I hope conclusively prove, my assertion; for, out of eleven churches (in the three circumjacent parishes), only three, being mother churches, can boast of a peal of bells, while every church has an organ, and there is not one without a choir. These are facts which seem to speak with all the power of a trumpet-stop 'on the great.' I trust, therefore, they will make themselves heard.

J. P. W.

Published: 8.vii.1871

MUSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

HOWEVER humbly 'J.F.W.' (in last week's 'CHURCH BELLS') may think of himself or others, he may comfort himself by feeling assured that it requires no 'golden key of powerful trade interest' to open the pages of at least one high musical periodical—the *Musical Standard*. I am myself but a humble individual, yet I have never found the pages of that periodical closed to the trifles I may have occasionally sent; and not only that, but I have been favoured with thanks from the editor and a gratuitous supply of his periodical to boot.

H. T. E.

Published: 15.vii.1871

THE fine peal of bells lately placed in Worcester Cathedral have been carefully studied by Dr. Steiner and a deputation from St. Paul's Cathedral, for the purpose of considering how far a similar set would be suitable for the latter church.

Published: 20.xii.1873

A SPECIAL service was recently held for the officers and members of the St. Stephen's Ringers' Society at Bristol, to which they were invited by the Vicar, the Rev. F. Wayet. A sermon was preached by the Rev. J. H. Bright. In the course of it he reminded them that it was the first time for very many years on which they had met together as a society for holy worship. From the rules it appears that the objects of the Society were not alone the ringing of bells, but the promoting of good and holy living among the members. One rule in the ancient charter, granted by Queen Elizabeth, is especially observable:—'That every member should always kneel down and pray before he went into the belfry.'

Published: 10.i.1874

A RING of bells, to cost 700*l.*, is to be placed in the tower of St. Thomas's Church, Rhyl, as a mark of the gratitude with which the parishioners regard Canon Morgan's consent to stay among them when offered a much richer living.—*Church Herald*.

Published: 21.iii.1874

A CARILLON of chimes has been added to the tower of Shoreditch parish church. It was tested on Tuesday. The music of the bells is described as being remarkably sweet and clear.

Published: 3.iv.1875

THE Grocers' Company is said to have contributed 350*l.* for a bell, and a gentleman has offered to provide the money for the chimes for St. Paul's Cathedral.

Published: 26.ii.1876

BELLS FOR ST. PAUL'S.—The Grocers', Clothworkers', and Fishmongers' Companies have each presented a bell for the proposed ring in St. Paul's Cathedral; the Plumbers' Company and others have also given contributions.

Published: 18.iii.1876

BELLS FOR ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.—The Tallow-Chandlers' Company have voted twenty guineas to the Bells and Chimes Fund for St. Paul's Cathedral. The Corporation of London having recently presented the largest, or 'tenor,' bell, and six of the City Companies having given seven more bells, the four bells required to complete the ring of twelve have been munificently given by the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. A considerable sum is, however, still required to meet the cost of hanging the bells, and other incidental expenses. Contributions towards which will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Committee.

Published: 11.xi.1876

CHURCH BELLS.

On Sunday week the Bishop of Manchester preached two sermons at Church Kirk, on the inauguration of a new ring of bells. In his morning sermon he repeated some remarks which he said had been received with considerable disfavour, though he did not care for that. He hoped those bells would never be rung for any purpose which indicated a distinction of feeling, nor on any occasion when the sound of them, though pleasant to some, would be distasteful to others. His Lordship proceeded:—‘I thought it an unseemly thing when the bells of the Blackburn parish church were rung as a note of triumph at the late election. I think we Churchmen ought to remember that our Church is the National Church; and if you mean to say she is to dwindle into a sect, either a religious or political sect, I wish you well to weigh the consequences. I hold—and I think it is consistent with the teachings of Christ—that the National Church ought to be the home of all citizens. Now, in England, we have divisions of feeling in matters of politics. There are those amongst us who are Conservatives, and there are those amongst us who are Liberals, and both may be, and I hope often are, equally good Churchmen. I have known Liberals who have seemed to me to take much broader and more intelligent views of what the Church should be than I have found in some Conservatives. At any rate, the Church is the National Church, and I say distinctly that church bells therefore ought never to be rung to celebrate a mere political triumph, which may be the triumph of one body of Churchmen over another. I was very pleased to see amongst the subscribers to your new ring of bells the names of several Nonconformists, and I hope that those bells will never be rung on any occasion which would give pain to Nonconformists. We don't want to give pain to Nonconformists, though we wish they were one with us, for then we feel the Word would be better, and would do more good; but we have no right nor desire to hinder the work which the Wesleyans and the Presbyterians are doing, and we don't want to hear the sounds of a ring of our bells over a Church victory at the expense of the Nonconformists. There has been united action in the purchase of those bells; and I ask you to take your Bishop's advice—to take care that those bells are never rung except when every heart can beat in unison, and that their sound shall never mark the unhappy differences which, either as English Christians or English citizens, sometimes separate us one from another.’

Published: 15.iv.1876

A Church Bell Wanted.

Sir,—I am the newly-appointed clergyman of All Saints, Gladstone, a church recently built to supply the wants of a suburb of the city of Invercargill. We have many very pressing needs in order to the completion of our church within and without. Among other things, a church bell is greatly in request, but we are not in a position as yet to purchase, as a very small one would be of little use, the population being scattered. If any church in the mother-country has a spare or disused bell, say from eighteen inches and upwards in diameter, it would be a great boon to us in this distant cure. Our Bishop (Dr. S. T. Nevill, of Dunedin), who is now in England, would, I am certain, readily take charge of it. He may be communicated with at the office of the S. P. G., London. FRANCIS KNOWLES, Gladstone, Southland, New Zealand.

Published: 10.viii.1878

A Church Bell for Seamen.

Sir,—Would you allow me to ask any of your readers who have a small church bell to spare to give it to the Missions to Seamen Society, 1 Buckingham Street, Strand, London, W.C., for St. James's Seamen's Church, Pierhead, Newport, Mon., which is greatly in need of a bell to sound over the docks and shipping. WM. DAWSON, Commander R.N.

Published: 28.ix.1878

The *Bristol Times* says that the very fine tower of Chewton Mendip Church has been so much damaged by bell-ringing that the diocesan architect (Mr. Perry) has recommended the suspension of the ringing, if not entirely, at least almost so, and the rebuilding of the bell turret.

Published 1.ii.1879

HEARTY HINTS TO LAY OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH.

By George Venables, S.C.L., Vicar of Great Yarmouth.

No. VI.—THE BELL-RINGERS.

OH, the Bell-ringers, is it !' is no uncommon cry. 'I'll have nothing to do with them; they are such drunken, ill-mannered, bad-behaved men, that I say I'll have nothing to do with them.' Gently, gently, my friend ! Bell-ringers are not all I could wish them to be in every place and in every particular, but, to say the truth, I myself am not altogether what I wish to be in every particular. And if it be so that you have known some very bad men amongst bell-ringers, let me say that I have also known some very quiet, decent, well-conducted men, whose children are a credit to them, and it is not fair to denounce all the race because some of them are bad. One thing, at any rate, I must say for ringers, viz. 'They are no fools.' They could not ring if they were. He has above the average of brain power who can ring changes well upon a

ring of bells. Some of our wiseacres would find it so if they tried. A good memory, i. e. an accurate memory and a quick memory, as well as coolness and rapidity of action, are all needful to the formation of a good bell-ringer.

Many a Bell-ringer has been drunk, and I mourn over it much. But no sot, no fool, no silly, gaping, empty-brained fellow, will ever be fit to be called a bell-ringer.

Look at that wonderful set of hand-bell ringers of Oldham, in Lancashire ! Their performances produce a rivalry in my brain between wonder and delight. Ten or twelve men stand with four or more bells each, placed upon a thick woollen cloth before them, and then, without hesitation, blunder, or confusion, one tune rings out after another by their manipulation, producing an effect of sound that I long to hear again. And these remarks apply, in their measure of justice, to other bands of hand-bell ringers in other places.

It is said that Bell-ringers are often heavy drinkers, heavy swearers, and bad livers ; and it is too true, that, having called the parishioners to the church, they frequently fail to remain to worship God themselves. These things are to be deplored deeply. But there is no reason why they should occur. They are not of necessity attached to bell-ringing. I can just recollect the time when the gentry used to think it no unfit employment to go to the bell-ringing chamber and ring the bells. One much-respected clergyman—a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian, now resident in Devonshire—has swung many a bell (all honour to him !) in a way which many a ringer may do well to imitate. I fear, however, that when our gentry left the church steeple, they left behind them some ill practices which they had introduced. I strongly suspect that they were the foremost in sending for drink into the ringing-loft, and this was soon followed by the ribald joke, the irreverent loud laugh, and then it became but an easy and a natural thing for the lads of the village who succeeded them in ringing to succeed them also in improprieties, for which, if rebuked, they could too often quote the example of their superiors in station as their precedent.

Now it must be plain to Bell-ringers who have read so far, that though I deprecate all misbehaviour on their part, I do by no means depreciate the art of bell-ringing, nor do I allow that the whole set of bell-ringers are bad because too many of them are not what we could desire. Some of them are fine fellows and noble characters. Some years since I met with a record (I think in Sussex) of one James Ogden, of Ashton-under-Lyne, who, in his seventy-seventh year, went up into the fine steeple of Ashton parish church and rang 5000 changes on his bell of 28 cwt. He must have been a fine fellow ! 828 changes were rung at his death. (I think 928 is meant, in allusion to the months he had lived.)

But my aim in this paper is to say a few honest words to Bell-ringers in a friendly spirit. Attention to a very few simple matters would soon rank them amongst our most valuable Church workers. Why should they not be regarded as 'working bees,' and as working together with other helpers in Church work, just as singers, and sextons, and vergers, and Sunday-school teachers are ?

First, then, I must proceed to 'lay down the law,' of which there is no sort of doubt whatever. The ringers have no right whatever to enter the bell-ringing chamber or to ring the bells without the consent of the vicar and at least one of the churchwardens. This has been disputed. Locks have been forced and doors have been broken under the terrible excitement of some political election, but it has ended in the law being clearly defined, and pronounced to give the clergyman an absolute veto in the use of the bells. They cannot, legally, be rung at all against the consent of the clergyman of the parish. This is beyond doubt. They may be rung with his consent and that of one churchwarden, on all occasions, agreeable to Canons 15, 17, and 88.

The amusing little bit of law, therefore, which a few years ago was pronounced in a parish in Buckinghamshire, in which I ministered on one or two occasions, will not do. The ringers did not quite like 'the new-fangled ways,' as they termed them, of the new vicar, and he at last closed the belfry. An 'indignation meeting' was held at the public-house, and after a spirited discussion and considerable abstraction from the beer-barrel it was discovered, beyond all doubt, that the vicar 'hadn't a leg to stand upon,' and that every parishioner had a right to enter the loft and to use the bells ; because, as one of the worthies told the curate in charge,

'You see, sir, the very name tells us all that ; for it is called *the bell free*, and this shows as the bells is free to all !' In spite of this piece of rustic law (and it really occurred as described) the sentence must be reversed. Belfry is a word which some derive from *'bujfroy'*, a tower ; others from bell, and *ferre*, to carry, thus meaning a place to bear or carry bells ; but I incline to trace it to *bell* and *fy*, a number or collection of bells.

At all events, the sounding of the bells is not permissible in contradiction to the clergyman's decision, and never ought the bells to be used except in connexion with Church purposes. The bells ought to be to the whole parish something like what the organ is to the congregation, and should send forth their varied peals in accordance with the circumstances under which they are rung. Thus used, and exclusively thus used, they might become of no small utility, and also full of interest. Amongst other orders it is enjoined, in the 67th Canon, that 'when any is passing out of this life a bell shall be tolled, and the minister shall not then slack to do his last duty. And after the person's death (if it so fall out), there shall be rung no more but one short peal, and one other before the burial, and one other after the burial.' There is something very beautiful and Christianlike in all this. When death seems likely to ensue, the 'passing' bell announces, by its solemn booming, to all the parishioners what is likely to occur, that they may pray for the departing soul then passing away. If death takes place, a short, solemn peal immediately, and repeated just before and just after the burial, are in strict keeping with the only Christian doctrine of burial that the Church knows or can know, viz. that we, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, commit the dead body to the grave.

If, then, Bell-ringers will now see with me that bells ought to be used for religious purposes only in connexion with the Church, I shall easily persuade them to adopt the following principles of regulation :—

1. Have a tariff of reasonable charges, so that your services may be often used for religious purposes as much as possible, at weddings, and at funerals, and on other public religious occasions.

2. Have a certain fund to which all your earnings and receipts as ringers shall be devoted, such as a clothing-club for yourself, or your wife, or your children. Don't spend your receipts in drink. The habit of spending receipts for ringing in drink has done bell-ringers incredible mischief morally, and lowered them sadly in the eyes of their neighbours.

3. Allow no bad language in your ringing-chamber. It is a capital plan to ring the bells in the church itself, and this is the old and true way. If the ventilation is good, ringers need not be so 'hot' as to be unable to remain to Divine service.

4. Do not allow yourselves to be spoken of as a rough set of men. Determine to be, and be, an honest set of manly Christians who can ring well, and who live as manly Christians ought to live.

It is moral cowardice which makes many men sinners. Men fear men more than they fear God. They dread the scold of fellow-creatures more than they fear the anger of Jehovah. Good ringers must generally be lithe, strong, nimble fellows ; and they must also be clever fellows with good, quick memories, and a calm, keen eye. Then be in every other respect, as well, true men. Don't be strong men physically, and poor, weak, puny cowards morally. Be manly in all things ; not afraid to scorn and put down the immodest word, the low joke, or the thoughtless oath ; but as you, by your admirable ringing, elicit the prayers of others for the dying, or sympathy for the bereaved, and as you call others to rejoice with the rejoicing, or to gather together within God's house of prayer, so, I beseech you, become admirable for your manly morality and your masculine religion. Handle the solly (originally 'sally') with vigour, and let it escape your grasp with precision. But while you do so, regard yourself as engaged in a religious labour, and let your correct style of ringing be but an external illustration of your own correct style of living. Now I have defended you heartily, and I have given you some hearty advice. The fact is, I love good ringing and good ringers, and I desire the ringers to be ready for grand promotion at their death. I wish that when '*the trumpet shall sound*,' they may hear that sound with a joy far exceeding the joy with which they listen to their beautiful bells. So I do earnestly hope that my friends the bell-ringers will take my hints heartily, and be in every sense good, hearty men.

THE DEDICATIONS OF OUR MINSTERS.

As a Supplement to my articles in *Church Bells*, 6th May, 1876, page 266; 29th December, 1877, page 39; and 16th March, 1878, page 171, I give the following:—

ENGLAND.

Minster at	Saints to whom dedicated.
1. Abergeenny, P.	Mary.
2. Aldeby, P.	Mary and Purceus.
3. Axminster, C.	Mary and John Baptist.
4. Basilech, P.	Basil.
5. Beauchief, P.	Mary and Thomas a Becket.
6. Beverley, A. C.	John.
7. Binham, P.	Holy Cross.
8. Blythe, P.	Mary.
9. Bodmin, P.	Petrick.
10. Bolton, P.	Mary, Cuthbert, and Margaret.
11. Bourne, P.	Peter.
12. Boxgrove, P.	Mary and Blaze.
13. Bradgate, C.	Holy Trinity.
14. Bredon, P.	Peter.
15. Bridlington, P.	Mary and John of Bridlington.
16. Bristol, P.	James.
17. Bromyard, C.	Peter.
18. Burton-on-Trent, A. C.	Modewma.
19. Cadbury (North), C.	Michael.
20. Cambridge, C.	Rhadegund, now Chapel of Jesus College.
21. Canterbury, A. C.	Holy Trinity and Christ.
22. Canyngham, N.	Mary.
23. Carmel, P.	Mary.
24. Chestow, P.	Mary.
25. Chetwood, P.	Mary and Nicholas.
26. Christchurch, Twyneham, Hants, P.	Holy Trinity and Christ.
27. Cirencester, A.	John Baptist and Mary.
28. Clovelly, C.	All Saints.
29. Cogges (Oxon), P.	Mary.
30. Crediton, C.	Holy Cross.
31. Crowland, A.	Bartholomew and Guthlac.
32. Davington, N.	Mary Magdalen.
33. Dereham (East), A.	Nicholas.
34. Dorchester (Oxon), A.	Peter, Paul, and Brinnus.
35. Dunmow Parva, P.	Mary.
36. Dunstable, P.	Peter and Paul.
37. Dunster, P.	George.
38. Eastbourne, P. N.	Mary.
39. Eastbridge, P.	Nicholas, Catherine, and Thomas.
40. Elstow, A. N.	Holy Trinity, Mary, and Helen.
41. Ecclesfield, P.	Mary.
42. Fairwell, N.	Mary and Bartholomew.
43. Folkestone, P.	Peter, Paul, Mary, and Eanswith.
44. Greatham, P. H.	Mary and Cuthbert.
45. Hackness, P. N.	Peter.
46. Hatfield Peverel, P.	Mary Magdalen, Virgin Mary, and Andrew.
47. Hayles, A.	Mary.
48. Heddington, P.	Mary, Catharine, and All Saints.
49. Hexham, P.	Andrew.
50. Higham Ferrers, C.	Mary, Thos. a Becket, and Edw. Confessor.
51. Holland, P.	Thomas a Becket.
52. Holm Cultram, A.	Mary.
53. Howden, C.	Peter.
54. Hull, P. C.	Holy Trinity.
55. Hurley, P.	Mary.
56. Ilford, P.	Mary Magdalen and Thomas a Becket.
57. Irlingborough, C.	Peter.
58. Jarow, A.	Paul.
59. King's Lynn, P.	Margaret.
60. Kirkley Beler, P.	Peter.
61. Lanercost, P.	Mary Magdalen.
62. Ledbury, C.	Mary.
63. Leominster, P. C.	Peter and Paul.
64. London, P.	Bartholomew, Smithfield.
65. " A. C.	Peter, Westminster Abbey.
66. " P.	Mary Ovege and Saviour; Southwark.
67. " P.	Augustine, Austin Friars.
68. Maidstone, C.	All Saints.
69. Malmsbury, A.	Aldeim and Michael.
70. Malpas (Monmouthshire), P.	Mary.
71. Malton (Old), P.	Mary.
72. Malvern, P.	Mary and Michael.
73. Marrick, P. N.	Andrew.
74. Milton (Dorset), A.	Mary, Michael, Samson, and Brantwafaler.
75. Minster (Kent), P.	Mary and Sexburg.
76. Minster Lovell, P. (Oxon), P.	Kenelm.
77. Monmouth, P.	Mary.
78. Nuneaton (Rebuilt), A. N.	Mary and Edward.
79. Ottery, C.	Mary.
80. Ovington (Northumberland), P.	Mary.
81. Oxford, C.	Beaui, now Worcester College Chapel.
82. " C.	Bernard, now St. John's College Chapel.
83. " C.	Trinity & Cuthbert, now Trin. Coll. Chapel.
84. Penwortham, P.	Mary.
85. Pershore, A.	Holy Cross, Mary, and Edburg.
86. Ramsey, A. N.	Mary.
87. Rosedale, P. N.	Mary and Lawrence.
88. Royston, P.	John Baptist and Thomas a Becket.
89. St. Bees, P.	Bega.
90. St. Germans, P.	German.
91. Salisbury, P.	Edmund.
92. Scarborough, P.	Mary.
93. Selby, A.	Mary and German.
94. Sempringham, P.	Mary.

Minster at	Saints to whom dedicated.
95. Sherborne, A.	Mary.
96. Shirburn (Durham), P.	Christ.
97. Shrewsbury, A.	Holy Cross, Peter, and Paul.
98. Southwell, C.	Paulinus.
99. Stafford, C.	Mary.
100. St. Austrey, P.	Andrew.
101. Stone, Staffordshire (Rebuilt), P.	Michael.
102. Stratford-on-Avon, C.	Holy Trinity.
103. Swavesey, P.	Andrew.
104. Tewkesbury, A.	Mary.
105. Thorney, A.	Mary and Botolph.
106. Tilley, P.	Mary.
107. Tisbury, P. N.	John.
108. Tonge, C.	Bartholomew.
109. Trencham (Rebuilt), P.	Mary and All Saints.
110. Tutbury, P.	Mary.
111. Uske, P. N.	Mary.
112. Waltham, A.	Holy Cross, Holy Trinity, and Lawrence.
113. Wareham, P.	Mary.
114. Warwick, C.	Mary.
115. Wenslow, C.	Holy Trinity.
(Westminster, see London, No. 65.)	
116. Wimborne, C. and N.	Cuthberga.
117. Winchester, H.	St. Cross.
118. Windsor, C.	George, Mary, and Edward, King and Confessor.
119. Wolverhampton, C.	Peter and Mary.
120. Woodbridge, P.	Mary.
121. Workop, P.	Mary and Cuthbert.
122. Wymondham, P.	Mary and Alban.
123. Yarmouth (Great), P.	Nicholas.
124. York, P.	Holy Trinity.

WALES.

1. Brecon, P.	John and Holy Cross.
2. Glynnock, P.	Banno.
3. Kidwelly, P.	Mary.
4. Pembroke, P.	John and Nicholas.
5. " P.	Daniel, now a Nonconformist Chapel.
6. Penmon, P.	Mary and Siroil, <i>alias</i> Syrian.
7. Wrexham, C.	Giles.

SCOTLAND.

1. Dunfermline, A.	Margaret, the Westminster Abbey of Scotland.
2. Jedburgh, P.	Mary.
3. Kelso, A.	Mary and John. Was a Minster till 1771, now entirely disused.
4. Melrose, A.	Mary.
5. Paisley, A.	James, Milburga, and Mirinus.
6. Perth, C.	John.
7. Stirling, P.	John.

IRELAND.

The only Monastic Buildings now used as places of worship are portions of—
 Atlare, F. Co. Limerick; Grey, A. Co. Kildare.
 Clare, A. Galway; Mullaghman, A. Meath.
 Howth Abbey is in ruins, but its bells are at Howth Castle. I am unable to find the dedications of any Minsters in Ireland.

THE BELLS.

Rings of Twelve.—Cirencester; London, St. Saviour's.
Rings of Ten.—Bristol, St. James; Maidstone; Warwick; Wolverhampton (2); Wrexham; Great Yarmouth.
Rings of Eight.—Beverley (1); Bodmin; Bolton; Burton-on-Trent; Chestow; Christchurch, Twyneham; Crediton; Dereham (1); Dorchester, Oxon; Dunstable (4); Dunster; Ecclesfield (1); Folkestone; Hexham (see *Church Bells*, 12th Feb. 1876, page 126); Howden; Hull; King's Lynn; Ledbury; Leominster (1); Oxford, St. John's College; Pershore; Romsey; St. Bees; Scarborough; Selby; Sherborne (2); Shrewsbury; Southwell; Stafford (1); Tewkesbury; Waltham; Wareham; Wimborne (2); Windsor; Woodbridge.
Rings of Six.—Axminster; Brecon; Bromyard; Cadbury; Higham Ferrers (1); London, Westminster Abbey (2); Malvern (1); Ottery; Royston; St. German's; Salisbury; St. Edmund; Stone; Stoke Courcy; Swavesey; Tisbury; Tonbridge (2); Uske; Workop.
Rings of Five.—Canyngham; Crowland; Elstow; Heddington; London, St. Bartholomew, Smithfield; Malmsbury; Milton (Dorset); Minster (Kent); Nuneaton; Tutbury; Wymondham (1).
Four Bells.—Carmel; Clovelly.
Three Bells.—Abergeenny; Bridlington; Cogges; Fairwell; Grey; Minster Lovell; Ovington.
Two Bells.—Cambridge, St. Rhadegund; Holm Cultram; Jarow; Malpas; Winchester, St. Cross.
One Bell.—Binham; Boxgrove; Dunmow Parva; Hatfield Peverel; Lanercost; London, Austinfriars; Thorney; Tilley; Trencham.

NOTES.

Those marked thus (1) are bells extra to the ring. Those omitted I have not yet found out.
 A. Abbey; C. Collegiate Church; F. Friary; H. Hospital; N. Nunnery; P. Priory. Minsters now in ruins are excluded from the list.
 Where only 'John' is given as a dedication, it is the Evangelist, not the Baptist. It is remarkable that so few of the churches are dedicated to the National Saints. St. George only appears at Nos. 37 and 118. St. David does not appear at all. St. Andrew only appears at Nos. 49, 73, 101, 109, and not once in Scotland. St. Patrick does not appear unless some of the Irish Minsters are so dedicated. This remark will apply equally to the Cathedrals: see former lists alluded to at head of this article.

No. 10. Bolton *Priory* is generally called the 'Abbey,' from its far-famed picture, 'In the Olden Time.'

No. 12. Boxgrove had a ring of eight formerly, but these were destroyed by fire, and one put up in 1674, F, about 20 cwt., by William Ekbridge.

No. 33. East Dereham.—The ring is in a detached tower to the N. West; the Sanctus on the roof of the Lantern tower.

No. 40. Elstow.—This ring is also in a detached tower to the N. West. John Buryan used to ring here; the fourth bell is called by his name; they all remain as in his time, none have been recast.

No. 62. Ledbury.—The ring is in a detached tower.

No. 69. Malmsbury.—This ring is also in a detached tower, some 200 yards to the S. West of the church. This tower belonged to St. Paul's parish church (now destroyed). The Minster towers have long since fallen. There were formerly ten bells in the Central and two in the W. tower.

No. 72. Malvern.—There were formerly three more bells, but they were removed many years since to St. Saviour's, London (No. 66); they do not now exist.

No. 78. Nuneaton was for many years a ruin; rebuilt 1576.
 No. 79. Ottery.—There are two towers (as Exeter Cathedral) on the transept ends—the ring of six is now in the south tower. There were formerly two rings, viz. four bells in each tower.

No. 97. Shrewsbury.—The ring is in the west tower, the centre having fallen. There were formerly two rings, viz. five bells in each tower.

No. 108. Trencham.—Formerly a ring of six, but sold, 1767, to Wolstonant parish church. Now the one bell is in a detached tower some distance from the church, the other side of the highway.

Canterbury, Exeter, Lincoln, and Wells Cathedrals formerly had double rings, as Ottery and Shrewsbury above.

In addition to the list given there exists a detached tower, formerly belonging to Bury St. Edmunds Abbey, now forming a belfry to St. James' parish church; it contains a ring of ten bells.

Also at Evesham. The detached tower of the Minster remains used as a belfry for St. Leonard and St. Lawrence churches, which stand in one enclosure: it has a ring of eight bells.

Of the Minster *RINGS*—Glastonbury had six in the central tower and five in the clock tower in 1308; and at the survey at the Dissolution, 7 Sept. 1548, 'there remained in the great tower viij very grete and in the Church xviij most lurge'; Ears Coln had five; Derley had six; Ivinghoe had three, of which one went to Nettleden Chapel; Wenlock had three, which went to Wolverhampton in 1540; Dieulacres had six; and one of the bells of Valle Crucis Abbey, Denbighshire, is now at Baschurch, Salop, and forms the second of the ring of four. Stamerdale Priory (3 miles east of Wincanton, Somerset) is in ruins, but in 1791 one bell still remained in its turret.

Additions to my last article, *Church Bells*, 16th March, 1878, p. 171:—
 Adelaide Cathedral is dedicated to St. Peter.
 Newfoundland is dedicated to St. John.

From the rings of ten *take away* Durham.
 To the rings of eight *add* Durham and Brisbane.
 In the list of churches with two bells, read, 'Truro (4)'. They are quarter bells put up by C. and G. Meers, 1851.

In conclusion I beg to thank Mr. G. J. Clarkson for his correction about Durham Cathedral on page 183 of *Church Bells* for 23rd March, 1878.

Bath, July, 1878. JNO. HARRIS, C.E.

DEDICATION OF THE BELLS OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

By the time these lines are in the reader's hands the bells of St. Paul's Cathedral will, God willing, have been dedicated to their holy uses with a special service, of which the following outline will have a special interest for our readers. When the Bishop and clergy have taken their places in the belfry, the Bishop, or in his absence the Dean, will commence the office by the invitatory, 'O Lord, open Thou our lips,' and after several versicles and the *Gloria Patri*, the choir will sing Psalms cxxx., lxvii., xxix., and cl. The service will then proceed with the Lord's Prayer and the following special versicles, responses, and prayers:—

V. O Lord, show Thy mercy upon us.

R. And grant us Thy salvation.

V. Sing we merrily unto God our strength.

R. Make a cheerful noise unto the God of Jacob.

V. O praise God in His holiness.

R. Praise Him in the firmament of His power.

V. Praise Him upon the well-tuned cymbals.

R. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals.

V. I was glad when they said unto me,

R. We will go into the House of the Lord.

O Everlasting God, Whom no man hath seen at any time, although Thou dost speak to the souls of men through the things that Thou hast made; receive, we beseech Thee, these Bells which are offered by Thy people for the service of Thy Holy Church, and bless them to the spiritual well-being of Thy servants, that they may remind us of Thy presence in life and in death. Do Thou mercifully visit our souls with solemn and holy thoughts; sanctify our trials and sorrows; brighten and chasten our joys; so that amid the changes of this mortal life, we may in heart and mind ever dwell with Thee, and may at the last enter into Thy Eternal rest through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

O Lord, Who by Thy servant Moses didst order that silver trumpets should be sounded at the time of sacrifice, to the end that Thy people Israel might be drawn to worship Thee; grant, we beseech Thee, that we who have been redeemed by the Blood of Thy only-begotten Son, may joyfully obey the call to meet together in Thy Holy Church, to render thanks for the great benefits which we have received at Thy hands, to set forth Thy most worthy praise, to hear Thy most holy Word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, Thy Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

Grant, O Lord, that all they who with their outward ears shall hear the sound of these Bells, may be moved inwardly in their spirits, and draw nigh unto Thee, the God of their salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Grant, O Lord, that whosoever, by reason of sickness or any other necessity, shall be hindered from coming into the House of the Lord, may, when he hears these Bells, in heart and mind ascend to Thee, and find with Thee peace and comfort, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Grant, O Lord, that all they who minister to Thy service in sounding these Bells, may be filled with all reverence and godly fear, and may be mindful ever of the sacredness of Thy house, putting away all idle thoughts and light behaviour, and continuing in holiness of life, so that they may stand with those who praise Thee evermore in the heavenly Jerusalem, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The hymn, 'When morning gilds the skies,' will then be sung, followed by the Collect for St. Paul's Day, and the service will be closed by the Blessing.

Published 2.xi.1878

The new ring of eight bells presented to Llandaff Cathedral as a memorial of Dean Williams has been opened with a special service. After a lesson, read by the Dean, Dr. Vaughan, the choir, accompanied by the Bishop and the cathedral clergy, walked in procession to the ringing chamber. The special office said by the Bishop was the same that was used at St. Paul's on All Saints' Day. The hymn, 'When morning gilds the sky,' was sung in the belfry, and on the return of the procession to the vestry the hymn, 'Christ is our Corner stone.' The Dean said the collect for All Saints' Day, and the Bishop gave the Blessing.

Published: 3.v.1879

The Passing Bell.

SIR,—1. Do any of your readers know of a parish where it is the custom to use the 'Passing Bell' legitimately for its purpose of inviting parishioners to pray for a supposed dying brother or sister? 2. Or of any place where a short peal is rung soon after death, and immediately before and after the funeral? 3. Or of any new church where these ancient and Christian-like customs have been introduced of late years? It would be very useful to know the names of any parishes wherein these customs exist.

The Bishop of Peterborough used the term 'Passing Bell' lately in a manner which almost intimated the prevalence of this custom within his knowledge, and perhaps his diocese. I believe the custom has never ceased in some few parishes in England, but cannot recollect where it is so. G. V.

Published: 23.x.1880

THE PROPER USE OF BELLS IN OUR CHURCHES.

THE archaeologist and campanologist find much pleasure in researches concerning Bells, and Dr. Raven of Great Yarmouth (no mean archaeologist) and Mr. Thomas North of Leicester have done very much, together with other gentlemen of learning and research, to publish many things of interest and profit in connexion with the bells of our churches, which might otherwise have been little known, and possibly entirely forgotten. All this is well, and much to be commended; but the time has surely now arrived for the consideration of the exclusively proper use of church bells. It is believed that not a few Church-folk would regard their entire removal with delight; nor can this be wondered at, when it is considered to what purposes they are often applied. There is, it is true, a great improvement in this particular, since an effort was made some years ago in the right direction touching the management of bells in church steeples; but they still cause a terrible annoyance in many places. Frequent ‘practices’ are a positive nuisance to neighbours who are compelled—headache or no headache, busy or at leisure—to listen to the noisy blunders which the errors of a young aspirant are sure to commit, producing a jangling which it is very distracting to be forced to listen to once or twice every week. This, it has been stated, can be avoided by some sort of practice on the bells in such a manner that no sound is created. But what can well be more annoying and heathenish than the tolling daily, for an hour or more, of a bell from the day of a death until the day of a funeral? Yet this is a very common custom still in many parishes, where, perhaps, the foe of the ringer has something to do with its continuance, and where a certain idea pervades the mind of an afflicted mourner that the act is one which testifies great respect to the memory of the departed. It sometimes happens that two or more such persons are to be tolled for; and thus, for two to three hours every morning, a bell is dismally tolling, until the burial puts an end to the proceeding. This is utterly meaningless, and has more of heathenism than Christianity about it. It cannot benefit the dead; it cannot console the bereaved; it certainly does not teach or instruct the multitude, although it may encourage morbid feelings in a few.

Published: 23.x.1880

See replies under 'Bells and Bell-Ringing' 10.799 6.xi.1880 and 10.815 13.xi.1880

The Passing Bell.

SIR,—In reply to the queries of ‘G. V.’,—1. I do not think the Passing Bell is now anywhere rung according to ancient practice. I can say that it is not so rung in any single parish in five contiguous counties where I have, during the past few years, made diligent inquiries into bell ‘uses.’ 2. The ‘one short peal’ directed by the Canon to be rung ‘after the party’s death’ is now represented by the knell—generally called the Passing Bell—rung on one bell only, with the distinctive toll at its close to intimate the sex, and sometimes the age, of the deceased. 2. (a) The ancient custom of chiming all the bells as the funeral procession approaches the church is still observed in a very few parishes known to me: generally the simple tolling of the tenor bell has superseded the more soothing and beautiful sound of the whole ring. The ringing of a muffled peal after the funeral of a church officer—cleric or lay—is not uncommon. 3. ‘G. V.’ refers in another column (p. 769) to the custom—which surely is confined to his own neighbourhood—of ‘tolling daily, for an hour or more, of a bell from the day of a death until the day of a funeral. Where such a custom exists it should immediately be stopped by the clergyman of the parish and his churchwardens, whose power over the bells cannot be questioned. At Stamford the tolling of the so-called Passing Bell or knell was abolished in 1872, and now the only notification of death is given by sounding what were formerly the distinctive tolls at the end of the knell according to sex, namely 3 x 3 for a male, or 3 x 2 for a female, repeated; and that on the tenor bell for adults, on the treble for children. Whilst the excessive tolling mentioned by ‘G. V.’ is much to be deprecated, perhaps the people of Stamford err in an opposite direction. If the bell be rung (not tolled) for a period of, say, ten minutes, with a pause of about thirty seconds between each stroke, the effect is very solemn, and calculated to arrest the attention, and, even in the midst of business and the pressing daily avocations of life, to solemnise the thoughts, and call to mind the transitory nature of merely earthly occupations. It may be doubted whether the ringing of the Passing Bell can ever be restored according to ancient usage: but such a ringing of the knell as I have pointed out may well be insisted upon, using the tenor bell for adults and a smaller one for children, and giving the tolls to denote the sex of the deceased at its close. And now the churchyard is thrown open to all it is a fitting time to restore the ‘one other’ short peal ‘before the burial, and one other after the burial’ (67th Canon), in cases where part of the Office is said within the church. This would add much to the calm solemnity of the rites of Christian burial, and would, I think, be specially acceptable at this time to Churchmen. Without recommending its use at all times, the difficulty and expense of the attendance of the ringers can be avoided at funerals by the erection of an inexpensive chiming apparatus, which can be as easily worked by the clerk or sexton as the dismal ringing of a single bell. THOMAS NORTH, F.S.A.

Published: 30.x.1880

The present system of tolling a bell at a funeral or at a death is contrary to the Church’s regulations, and in direct opposition to the intention for which bells were erected. The remedy would be, a return to the observance of the original intention. What is this? So far as relates to the death and burial of any Christian Churchman, there is no room for doubt about the treatment of bells, a treatment at once reasonable and Christianlike. Canon 67—after directing the minister to visit the sick and to instruct and comfort them in their distress ‘according to the order of the Communion Book if he be no preacher, or if he be a preacher then as he thinks convenient’—proceeds: ‘And when any is passing out of this life a bell shall be tolled, and the minister shall not then slack to do his last duty. And after the party’s death (if it so fall out) there shall be rung no more but one short peal, and one other before the burial, and one other after the burial.’ All which is evidently based upon the hopeful terms of the Gospel. In the time of sickness and dissolution, one of Christ’s ministers is to do his duty by a timely visit to the departing brother. Not this alone. The whole parish, by a suitable and distinctive tolling of the bell, is to be informed that one of the parishioners draweth nigh to the gates of death. But ‘the Communion of Saints’ being believed in, the whole of the people are thus warned in order that they may pray for the soul which is thought to be ‘passing out of this life.’ Can anything be so fitting and proper as this? Of course there might sometimes be a mistake, and it might ‘fall out’ that the sick one recovered. But what of that? Such prayers are not lost. And who would not like to die with the prayers of the people to wait him into the presence of the Redeemer, rather than that after his death this tolling of the bell should prove only a doleful clangor rolling out its moan from the old church tower every day for an hour, *ad per hour*, without the slightest benefit to any one except the ringer, who having ‘clocked’ the bell proceeds to strike the hammer against it, in a way which has cracked many of the best bells in the steeples of England? If the tolling of the bell were restrained to the one original and only purpose of asking the prayers of Christians for a dying brother or sister, this would indeed be to use it for a precious and profitable object both for the dying and the survivors. It would soothe, and harmonise with, the spirit of many a dying Christian to be persuaded that the members of Christ were interested in his welfare; and it could not fail to hallow and refine the minds of the good to be often thus brought to think of death in connexion with Christ and Christ’s Church. If it be urged that where a church contains but one bell there can be but one sound, it may be remarked that this is not quite the case; but that by certain strokes given in different ways, well known, upon the bell, it is customary to proclaim whether the person for whom the bell is about to be tolled is an elderly man or woman, a boy or a girl. Of course this can precede the ‘Passing Bell’ as readily as it precedes the tolling which now takes place after death. Indeed the bell now tolled after death is in reality the ‘Passing Bell,’ so used now as to save the ringer having to go at all hours to ring, so used as to render the object nugatory, and (as practised in many places) so used as to become a very great annoyance to dwellers near the church.

The Passing Bell.

SIR,—It does not appear that the ‘Passing Bell,’ rightly so called, is now known to any of your readers. ‘G. V.’ advocates the revival of the practice, and the Bishop of Peterborough speaks of it as if the custom actually existed. I think with him, that it is (in theory) a beautiful and edifying custom; but I am at a loss to conceive how it could be carried out, save, perhaps, in some very compact little parishes, with the houses all near the church. For how difficult it is in most cases to say when the soul is passing away, until a very short time before death—too late, very often, to give notice even in such a parish as I supposed above, and with the sexton ready at the bell-rope. True that the 67th Canon seems to suppose that a mistake will sometimes be made from the notice being given before the sick person is *in articulo*, from the words, ‘After the party’s death, if it shall so fall out, there shall be rung no more than one short peal;’ and ‘G. V.’ seems to think it would not matter if the passing bell were tolled for one who after all recovered. Nor would it matter much if the mistake was a great rarity. If it often occurred, however, would it not do away with all the good? nay, would it not in some places cause the whole thing to be turned into ridicule? While if notice were not given until the sick person was actually *in articulo mortis* it would, as I said before, be too late in most places for the bell to be tolled. In answer to ‘G. V.’s’ inquiries as to places where the short peal is rung soon after death, &c., does he mean a peal rung in the technical sense of the word? I presume the word is not thus used in the Canon, but simply means a bell tolled. This is usual after death, and this ‘knell’ is often called the ‘passing bell.’ In this parish there is no bell tolled on the day of death, owing to so many of the houses being at a distance from the church. On the morning of the day of burial, each bell (of a ring of eight) is struck three times for a man and twice for a woman. The tenor is tolled two or three times during the day, and half an hour before the burial, and is again struck somewhat quickly for five minutes after the funeral is over. Bishops Cannings, Wilts. C. W. HONY.

Published: 13.xi.1880

The Passing Bell.

SIR,—In answer to G. V.'s inquiries, I beg to state that the Passing Bell is rung in Nunaton after death takes place. The bells are eight in number. For a male person, each bell strikes three times; for a female, twice; for a young child it rings on the 6th; for a single young person on the 7th; and for a married person on the tenor.

JOHN WARREN.

SIR,—The 'knell' is still called the 'passing bell,' because once it was the passing bell. It is not difficult to see how readily it was found more convenient to unite the 'knell' with the 'short peal' ordered by the Canon, or to make the knell the substitute for the peal. Is there any probability that the Passing Bell would often be tolled needlessly? Or if it proved that the supposed dying man survived, is there really much fear of ridicule? I have prayed with supposed dying people. I have known a certificated experienced nurse say that death would ensue immediately; I have known a household believe a patient to be dying; I have known the patient announce the certainty of dissolution, and say farewell to all; and I have known the prayers provided by the Church, and many more prayers, offered on such occasions. It does not occur to me that there is anything out of place in all this, or anything ridiculous in praying for a supposed dying person, even it turn out that the supposed dying person recover. And if so, the danger of ridicule in calling others to pray for a supposed dying person is not very great. And even if ridicule ensued, does any hearty believer in the power of Christianity expect in this unbelieving age to escape it? As to the prayers put up on such occasions, prayers are never lost; at least so I believe. It is not likely the Canon meant by 'peal,' what is now understood by 'ringing,' which would have involved a collecting of the ringers and the raising of the bells. And the fact that many steeples contain but one, two, or three bells, shows this. Moreover, I find no quotation or user of the word 'peal' which implied that it means more than an using bells to create sounds. There is little meaning in the dismal wail of a bell for an hour or more after the death of any one. There is much meaning and beauty in the Church's old plans, and it is well worthy of consideration whether this be not the time to renew them in all their meaning and Christian-like intention. G. V.

Published: 20.xi.1880

Reply to letter published in 'Bells and Bell-Ringing' 10.799
6.xi.1880

The Use of Church Bells.

SIR,—Really, my friend 'Campana' rings out too sharply against my Comment! He seems to have forgotten that, when writing about bells, I wrote of the abuse of them in regard to the dying, the dead, and the burial of the dead. But I said nothing against their *proper* use on times of festive, *acred joy*, or their *improper* use at elections, &c. I stick to my text, and I repeat that the abuse of our bells in matters relating to the dying, the dead,

A Voice from Dunedin, N.Z.

SIR,—I desire to acknowledge through your paper the receipt of copies, which have been forwarded to me unsolicited by some kind friend whose acquaintance I should like to make, for the sake of tendering my many thanks. Out in the colony we value any papers from home, and especially those which are organs of our own beloved Church. Your paper reminds one of old times. Those who have a great love for the sound of the old church bells at home, miss them very much in the colony. We have not, as yet, a ring of bells in the city of Dunedin; nor can we boast of having a thorough good bell in any of our churches belonging to the English Communion, save at Port Chalmers, where we have three very nice bells, though small. The Church of St. John the Evangelist, of which I am incumbent,

ABOUT two o'clock on Good Friday morning the inhabitants of that part of Chester near the ancient cathedral church of St. John were roused by the crash of falling masonry and the clanging of bells. Half of the venerable tower of St. John's Church; 150 feet high, which was a landmark for the surrounding country, had fallen, and with it had come several of the bells. An immense crack, which had extended from the summit to the base for years past, had, after the rigour of the past winter, opened more widely, and the whole tower had given such signs of insecurity that the authorities of the church had taken steps to repair it. These precautions, however, came too late, for on the north side the tower was then evidently giving way, and was pronounced unsafe by the builder engaged on the work. The church itself and the abbey adjoining date from Saxon times, and the tower, built of the red sandstone of the district, in the Early English style of architecture, was one of its most beautiful features. In the tower was a ring of eight bells, the most melodious in the city, and five of these lie buried in the ruins, while the other three remain suspended in the belfry by the most slender support. Fortunately no lives have been lost, and the body of the church has not suffered except to a slight extent, the tower being isolated from it. The most serious loss is the entire destruction of a very massive and beautiful Early English porch and gateway. The half of the tower which is still standing is in a very precarious state. Another fall from the ruins of the tower took place on Tuesday, and there is no doubt that the rest of the tower will come down during the first gale of wind, bringing the rest of the magnificent ring of bells with it. The urgency of dealing with the ruins is so great that the matter has been discussed by the parishioners. The Vicar said the foundation was utterly bad, as it did not go down to the solid rock, and he feared it would be necessary to pull the tower entirely down, and, if the funds could be obtained, to rebuild it. Great regret was expressed at the prospect of this ancient and picturesque landmark being swept away. A proposition was made that, on antiquarian and architectural grounds, an appeal should be made to the whole country for funds to rebuild the tower.

Published: 23.iv.1881

THE Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's are making an effort to provide the cathedral of our metropolis with a large bell; and Canon Gregory, writing on the subject, says:—A few years since a peal was procured, chiefly by the liberality of the City and the City Companies, and we are now anxious to perfect what was then done. The bell which, by a singular misnomer, is now called the Big Bell of St. Paul's is in reality of little more than 5 tons weight. We are anxious that the cathedral should have a really big bell—say of 12 tons or thereabouts. Such a bell is found in many of the chief cathedrals on the Continent. Thus at Olmutz there is a bell which weighs nearly 18 tons; at Vienna there is one almost as heavy; at Sens the great bell weighs 15 tons; at Notre Dame, Paris, nearly 13 tons; at Magdeburg, the same weight; at Cologne and Amiens, 11 tons; at St. Peter's, Rome, 8 tons; while in England we find a bell at York which weighs nearly 11 tons, and one at Westminster of more than 13½ tons. It is our desire that St. Paul's, occupying the position it does of the cathedral of the richest city in the world, should have its bell-tower as well furnished as is any other bell-tower; and as it has been erected of sufficient size and strength to allow of such a bell being added to those it already possesses, we only need the requisite funds to secure this desirable addition to our belfry. A bell of 12 tons would cost about 2500*l.* Of this we have collected about one-half. The Dean and Chapter would themselves contribute 500*l.*; Canon Liddon, 100*l.*; Canon Gregory, 50*l.*; the Merchant Taylors' and the Mercers' Companies, 105*l.* each; the Clothworkers', the Grocers', and the Fishmongers' Companies, 100*l.* each; the Stationers' Company, 52*l.* 10*s.*; the Salters' Company, 50*l.*; the Wax Chandlers' Company, 25*l.*; Messrs. Hoare, 50*l.*; Dr. Stainer, 5*l.* We should be greatly obliged if any of your readers would assist us in realising our wish and enable us to order the new bell at once, and so place St. Paul's, in the matter of bells, in as favourable a position as are the cathedrals I have named. I shall thankfully receive any contributions sent to me for the purpose.

Published: 20.xi.1880

and the burial of the dead, demands reform in many places, and that this is the very epoch for such reform. As to 'noiseless practice,' I merely quoted from memory what I read lately in a book of counsel to ringers; and 'joyously hoped' it was good practical advice, which would soothe aching heads where the sounds of tyros in the ringing-chamber had nearly driven them wild! Perhaps the book is wrong? Perhaps 'Campana'?

P.S.—Robert Herrick, in his strange mixture of much that is lovely with something that is quaint and a little that is ludicrous, quite sustains the idea of the true use of the Passing Bell, as he says,—

'When the passing bell doth toll,
And the furies in a shoal
Come to fright my parting soul,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!'

He died in A.D. 1674.

G. V.

Published 8.i.1881

has been recently erected on the hill-top just above the city of Dunedin, in the suburb of Roslyn. At present we have a very small bell. Would any of your readers, who are doubtless lovers of church bells, assist us in procuring a good-sounding tenor bell? It would be a great boon to us and to the neighbourhood. The church is situated quite on the ridge of the hill, with a thickly populated valley on either side, and could not be better for sound. My good people have done, and are doing, much for their church; but unless we can move the hearts of kind friends to help us, we must wait a long time for a suitable bell to call us to the House of God. R. ALGERNON KIRKHAM.

St. John's Parsonage, Roslyn, Dunedin, N.Z.

Published: 4.xii.1880

STEPS are at once to be taken to remove the unsafe portion of the tower of St. John's, Chester, and to restore the structure so that use may be made of the fine set of bells which are hung in it. A resolution to this effect was adopted on Monday at a meeting of the citizens of Chester, presided over by the Mayor, and attended by the Bishop. The Bishop remarked that the citizens might be excused if they felt that they had good ground for complaint against the past generation, for if the past generation had not been guilty of extraordinary negligence they would not be now in their present perplexed condition. The tower was known long ago to need alteration, for twenty years since the ringing of the bells was stopped. Subscriptions to the amount of 450*l.* were offered in the room, the Bishop and the Mayor promising 100*l.* each.

Published: 7.v.1881

BELLS AND BELL-RINGING.—'J. M.' sends us a lengthy grumble because we devote a page and a half weekly (about an eighth of our space) to 'Bells and Bell-ringing,' and he asks, 'Does any human being read or feel any interest in these hieroglyphics?' We have often had to reply to such grumbles before, and we admit that they are reasonable from any gentleman who knows nothing of Change-ringing, or from any cleric whose fate it is to invite his people to church by the depressing ding-dong of a single bell. But from inquiries we made some years ago, we are able to reply to 'J. M.' that we believe that quite an eighth of our subscribers take *Church Bells* for the sake of the hieroglyphics he dislikes, and care nothing for many other parts of the paper. Indeed, we pride ourselves on having done good service by our 'Bells and Bell-ringing' page. The belfry in many parish churches with fine rings of bells was a part of the church in which the parson never set his foot, but which was held to be the special chamber of certain old men, not always of high reputation, who resented any interference with their proceedings in the belfry, where they had their beer, and who were to be seen on Sunday morning slouching off, unwashed and unshaven, as the congregation whom they had called to church were entering the sacred precincts. The ringers of the old school generally met at some public-house adjacent to the church, and reflected no great credit on the Church by their style of conviviality. If they were scienced enough to ring a peal, they reported their achievement, as a kind of sporting event, in the columns of *Bell's Life*. The page about which 'J. M.' grumbles has done much to change this, and has educated a new race of ringers, who are regarded by their clergy as being as truly Church-workers as are the choirmen; the belfry is as pleasant to visit as the vestry, and the triumphs of these ringers are amongst the paragraphs of which 'J. M.' would fain get rid, and relegate them to some sporting contemporary.

Published: 4.vi.1881

An Appeal for Rehanging a Ring of Bells.

SIR,—Will you kindly permit me through your columns to ask for help towards paying the cost of rehanging the bells of Hedon Church? The tower will be restored this summer, and as this will tax to the uttermost local resources I venture to appeal to a wider circle on behalf of the most necessary work of rehanging the bells and repairing the chimés. About 700l. has been spent in restoring the church, an engraving of which appeared in your paper some time ago. The tower contains six bells, which are accounted one of the best rings in the East Riding of Yorkshire. The complete work, including rehanging the bells and repairing the chimés, will cost between 50l. and 60l. The Rev. C. E. Camidge, of Thirsk, and formerly Vicar of Hedon, has expressed his great pleasure at hearing of the rehanging, which, he says, 'was very much wanted.' He has himself contributed 5l. An application has recently been made to Sir Edmund Beckett for a faculty to restore the tower. He asked if we were not intending to rehang the bells, and I told him in answer that I have undertaken the work. I appeal to all lovers of bells to help me, and shall be glad to acknowledge any sum, however small, sent to me for this object (Money Order Office at Hedon).

Hedon Vicarage, Hull.

H. L. CLARKE, Vicar of Hedon.

Published: 9.vii.1881

Christ Church, Zanzibar.—A Ring of Bells.

SIR,—May I venture to call the attention of your readers to a want in connexion with the Universities Mission to Central Africa? I think that *Church Bells* will be the best medium for making the want known to Churchmen. Your readers are doubtless aware that a noble church is now built upon the site of the old slave-market in Zanzibar, and that the offering of daily prayer and frequent communion arises to the throne of God from the very spot where, less than twelve years ago, the degrading horrors of the slave-auction cried out to Him for vengeance. It was on Christmas Day, 1873, that the first stone was laid, and on Christmas Day, 1880, full and hearty services were held within its walls, though it was some months later before the exterior of the building was finished. Let me hasten to add, that not a penny of the Mission Funds has been spent upon any part of the church. It has been wholly raised by special gifts. Indeed it may be called the child of the Day of Intercession for Missions, 1872. The Rev. A. N. West, of Buckingham, gave himself soon afterwards to the work of the Mission, purchased the site of the slave-market, and gave largely towards the cost, before his death on Christmas Day, 1874. It has since been completed as in some way a *Memorial* Church for those who have passed away in the service of the Mission. I may also mention, that while in 1873 the British Consul-General, fearing a disturbance on the part of the Mahometans, desired that the service at the laying of the first stone should be of as private a character as possible, the church has proved to be, on the contrary, an object of constant interest to many of the Arab population, who held Bishop Steere in the greatest respect and esteem. The Sultan has himself presented a clock for the tower. And the mention of the tower brings me to the want as to which I am writing. Can the church be considered complete without its ring of bells? There are, however, no funds left for them. Indeed, money is still required for some of the internal fittings. Would not a *Church Bells* fund to furnish such a ring be a happy contribution on the part of your subscribers and readers to the Slave-market Church? The Bishop desires a ring of a special character. He is very anxious for bells which will make music with little noise. His words are, 'The chime of bells (carillon fashion) may, I hope, be possible. The plan of the tower-stage is this: six feet square inside, with twelve openings, fourteen inches by six feet. I think we might have twenty small bells set in these openings, to be played from a sort of keyboard in the centre. Twelve notes, with the accidentals complete, would enable us to play almost any melody. Large bells we are better without.' Will your readers suggest what size the bells should run? Can anybody say what they are likely to cost? All suggestions and contributions will be gladly received by the Rev. W. Foxley Norris, Rector, Witney, Treasurer of the Slave-market Church Fund, or by me, Little Comberton, Pershore.

E. S. LOWNDEN.

Published: 21.i.1882

The Peal of Small Bells for Zanzibar.

SIR,—I am much obliged to you for kindly inserting my letter about a peal of bells for the Slave-market Church in Zanzibar in your number of January 21st. You have kindly allowed me to sound a note of inquiry for information, and of invitation for contributions. The latter has met with a generous response. I have received (in addition to the 20l. paid last year as 'A Thank Offering') a kind gift of 2l. 'from one who loves to hear the Sunday chimés.' I trust that it is the first of many similar gifts. Could not some leaders of ringers kindly get up small subscriptions of 1s. or 6d. a-head, so that the *Church Bells* peal may be a real gift from church bell-ringers to the devoted Bishop and Missionaries in Central Africa, whose work among the released slaves is of so special a kind? But I write also for information. Can any of your readers inform me where some very small bells are hung as a peal, or for the purpose of being played upon? I hear that there is one in a Roman Catholic convent near Worcester. Canon Cattley will give me a letter of introduction to the priest in charge. I should be glad to know of others, and the names of their founders or makers.

E. S. LOWNDEN.

Published: 18.ii.1882

Mr. Langrishe and Irish Church Bells.

SIR,—In the letter of your Irish correspondent, published in *Church Bells* of the 28th Jan., I am credited with having read a paper on 'Irish Church Bells' at the Annual Meeting of the Archeological Association of Ireland in Kilkenny on the 14th ult., and with having exhibited 'castings' of several bells. As I have been credited with more than I deserve, and as the use of the word 'castings' might lead people to suppose that I had exhibited some ancient Irish bells, I would crave your permission to say a few words in explanation.

On a former occasion I had read a paper on the above subject, which has since appeared in the Journal of the Association for April 1881, and I had stated my intention of endeavouring to continue such notices until we had got a record of all existing Irish bells of any antiquarian interest. As I had not been able to collect all the necessary information for a second notice, I merely made a few remarks to show how well founded I considered the statement made, I think, by the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe in one of his works on bells, that Roger Purdie of Salisbury had cast the bells for St. Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny, in 1674-5, from the same patterns which he had used for moulding the bells at Limerick in 1673, and I exhibited 'rubblings' of the inscriptions on the four old bells of the present ring of eight in St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, the third and tenor of which, weighing respectively about 7 cwt. and 22 cwt., were cast by William and Roger Purdie, and William Covey. The Kilkenny bells were recast in 1851, so we can only now judge by the records of them in the history of St. Canice's Cathedral by the Rev. James Graves and J. G. A. Prim.

R. LANGRISHE, V.P., R.H.A.A.I.

Published: 4.iii.1882

TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH BELLS.

By 'THE SHERWOOD FORESTER.'

DID you ever distinguish the different effects on the sense—I had almost said on the soul—of urban and rural campanology? How remarkably do they illustrate the law of the association of ideas, as well as the kinship between sense and thought! One of my earliest memories is of the 'ding-dong-bell' of my native village church on a calm, gray Sunday; and of the 'shout' of the big tenor across the wide landscape as it now and then swung out singly on particular occasions. All over wide England I have heard church bells since then, but those of my native place sound in the halls of memory distinct from all. How widely different from the 'ting-tang-ting' and the deep 'dong-dong-dong' in the minor key, of the two next parishes! And then the solemn calls from spires and old towers, remote yet well seen, in the wide surrounding landscapes! I could stand on one spot and tell by the sound alone from which of nine distinguishable churches it came. Now the slow 'one—one—one,' and now the livelier peal or lowlier chime, illustrating Lord John Manners' words,

'Upon the breeze the hallow'd sound

Of Sunday bells is borne—

That sound which ne'er a Christian hears,

And hearing feels forlorn.'

There are very few towns of any importance without a good ring of bells, and some have many; but their music to me is sweeter if I am far in the green country when listening to them—when all their wrangle and jangle is softened by distance—than when in the hurrying crowd of the street. The tones that in the country sound sacred, in the town sound secular, in comparison, and make one realise Lord John's idea the better. Nearly fifty years ago, one of the greatest treats in my experience was to be, on a sunny Sabbath afternoon, a few miles out of York, and mark the lofty Minster peering over all the scene, hearing the waves of melody brought near, then carried afar, by the gently varying breeze, till the hour had come for their subsiding, when the landscape would be left apparently more silent than before, and a sweet solemnity would steal over the soul. I felt very grateful for the privilege of then and thus hearing those ten musical bells. What then must it have been to me one evening, a few years later, to stand on the city walls while the tower that contained them was all ablaze, and to hear, ever and anon, one of the same bells falling with a loud, harsh crash among the burning timbers below, and wakening a shower of fire-flakes, thick as snow or the off-scatterings of a hundred rockets? Dissenter though I had been, it was impossible to avoid weeping.

Sometimes on a Christmas or a New-year's Eve, when I have heard a local ring of bells strike up, it has carried the mind away over all Christendom, as the thought occurred that (making a little allowance for longitude, of course) millions of bells were at once proclaiming to hundreds of millions of people one joyous event. But most of all was I once struck on the eastern side of London, as a very gentle air at midnight was breathing from the west, and all the bells of all the metropolitan and suburban churches were simultaneously ringing 'the old year out and new year in,' with an effect words could never describe. I was at the instant ascending the steps to the door of a friend at Kingsland, when the whole sky suddenly became filled with that great aggregation of sound. Whatever may be our joy on hearing the accustomed glee or solemn peal of home church bells, it is quite another thing to hear at once all the bells of all London, each bell merging its tone in the universal *scroon* that mourns the death of the Old Year! The effect on the mind was most depressing. It sounded not at all as each bell rung forth its call, but more like what one might imagine of a *universal dumb peal*. I was glad when the New Year, with all its hopes and promises, had set fairly in; and the next day happening to be Sunday, doubly glad, as I went with my friends to their metropolitan house of God, that my old *confreres* would be similarly engaged in the remote woodland villages of Sherwood Forest.

Published: 30.vii.1881

The Zanzibar Bells.

SIR,—None who have watched the work of the Universities Mission to Central Africa will fail to rejoice at the announcement that Bishop Steere wishes to have some bells in the tower of his Cathedral, but few will, I think, fail to regret the form his scheme has taken. We cannot but feel, in the first place, that to send out to the cathedral church of an English Mission a score of such small bells as are proposed is a misrepresentation of English ideas about bells, and, as such, likely to lessen the respect of many for the Mission, both at home and in Zanzibar. It is stated as an objection to a ring of bells that the Bishop does not wish to annoy the Mohammedan population, but any one who has lived near a carillon must know from sad experience that they are far more objectionable than several rings of bells; and, moreover, it would surely be the very extreme of annoyance to them to hear the hymn-tunes of the religion which is endeavouring to supersede their own dinned into their ears. I do not know the size of the tower, but I am certain that a tower that will hold twenty small bells and all the machinery for playing tunes will easily hold a light ring of six or, perhaps, even of eight bells: it is wonderful in what a small space a ring of bells can be hung. Again, the cost of a light ring of six bells would not be more than would be readily subscribed by the supporters of the Mission. Lastly, the ringing of the bells for service and on other occasions would afford a healthy and enjoyable occupation for some of the men and boys at the Mission; they could be easily taught to manage a bell by the man who would in any case have to go out to hang the bells, and there is no reason why, before long, Zanzibar should not boast a party of change-ringers equal to many in England: for, with the ringing societies that exist at both our great Universities, clergy and others going to the Mission have plenty of opportunities of learning enough about change-ringing to teach a side when they get to Zanzibar. In conclusion, I may add that I should not have written the above had I not found that it represents the opinion of nearly every one I have met who has heard of Bishop Steere's scheme. I hope that it may not be too late for the Bishop to reconsider his scheme. C.

Published: 10.vi.1882

The Zanzibar Bells.

SIR,—I was very glad to see 'C.'s letter in your columns of the 10th ult., as it affords evidence of the kind interest which the proposed ring of bells for the Slave-market Church has excited; but his advice comes a little late in the day. It was in *Church Bells* of the 12th of February last that I wrote, asking for counsel on the matter; 'C.' writes on the 10th of June. Secondly, the 'tower' of the cathedral is really the clock-turret, in which the Bishop has left an open chamber six feet square in area and about ten feet in height, available for a bell-chamber. It has on each of its four faces three narrow, lancet openings. 'C.' would find it impossible to arrange his 'ring of six, perhaps even of eight bells,' however 'light,' with accommodation also for the ringers, in a space so small.

Messrs. Warner came forward and offered generously to make, at their own risk, a ring of small bells (two octaves, with accidentals), to be played, not by machinery, but by one or two pairs of hands on a keyboard. The opportune arrival of Bishop Steere in England, when the smaller octave was made, enabled him to arrange with them the exact method in which the bells can best and most conveniently fill the space in the turret. The Bishop was able also to test the sound and to express himself more than pleased with their tone. What could we want more? We are only too glad to leave the decision as to their being adopted in his cathedral in the hands of the tried leader of the Mission, who has happily triumphed over many far greater mechanical—not to speak of moral and spiritual difficulties—in Zanzibar and East Africa.

But if it be impossible to hang a real ring of bells in Christ Church, Zanzibar, if the carillon—a good English one, not foreign—must educate the native ear to long for the more perfect peal, I am happy to inform 'C.' that the island of Zanzibar will be able in course of time to give every opportunity of showing 'true English ideas about church bells and change-ringers,' as well as securing 'healthy and enjoyable occupation for the men and boys of the Mission,' who show an aptitude for change-ringing. In the church now being built at Mbweni, the mission village (or town, as it will soon deserve to be called), situate four miles from the city, the foundations of a true tower have been laid, in which ample space will be found for the hanging of a true ring of good old English bells. I can promise, that if 'C.' will take in hand the furnishing of the Mbweni tower with such a ring as soon as it is ready for it, the Bishop and Archdeacon Hodgson will give him a hearty welcome when he goes out to superintend their hanging. Mr. Horace Walter says that the Africans have a better knowledge of time than Europeans. He believes 'they could ring a peal of twenty bells as easily as they can beat twenty drums on a moonlight night; a thing,' he adds, 'to hear and to appreciate.'

E. S. LOWDES.

[It is to be hoped that the balance due on the bells may be more than paid for, so that, before the tower of the church at Mbweni is finished, a Bells Fund may be well forward to secure for them a real 'ring' of bells. If the Africans keep time so well, they ought to have the opportunity of showing their powers in a church tower.—En.]

Published: 1.vii.1882

The Bells of St. Margaret, Barming.

SIR,—Will any one, fond of such inventions, suggest a set of original inscriptions suitable for a ring of five bells, which are to be presented to the church of St. Margaret, Barming, by Mr. J. J. Ellis, of the Priory, East Farleigh? It seems to me that the four new bells might have legends which may be Catholic and historical, yet reflecting the Protestant side of our Church, as respects the inscription on an old bell, which has survived two sets. The bells are—

- The Treble—C♯; cracked; 'joseph hatch made me, 1622.'
 2nd, B, sound; 'Sancte Petre ora pro nobis.'
 3rd, A♯; gone; to be restored.
 4th, G♯; cracked; 'joseph hatch made me, 1629.'
 5th, F♯; new, to be added.

Barming is in the richest part of the valley of the Medway, renowned for fruit and hops. This was called 'Three Bell Valley;' but we cannot well help breaking the tradition, as our three bells were certainly part of a ring of four. *Barming Rectory, Maidstone.* T. W. CARR.

Published: 8.ix.1883

The Bells of St. Margaret, Barming.

SIR,—No one answered the appeal in *Church Bells*, September 8th, p. 790, to suggest inscriptions suitable for a ring of five bells, of which one only was a pre-Reformation bell. I venture, therefore, to send the following, which may interest some of your readers:—

- Treble ... 'Margaretam Margareta nuntio.'
 2nd (old) 'Sancte Petre ora pro nobis.'
 3rd ... 'Fili Dei te rogamus audi nos.'
 4th ... 'Sancte Trinitas miserere nobis.'
 5th ... 'Laus Domini in Ecclesia Sanctorum.'

Any Rules for a Bell-ringers' Guild or Association, which have been found practical and good, would be gladly received. T. W. Carr. *Barming Rectory, Maidstone.*

Published 27.x.1883

THE SONG OF THE BELLS; as sung at a Village Concert in aid of a fund for the restoration of the bells of Monk Soham Church. The words and music by the Ven. Archdeacon Groome, M.A., rector of Monk Soham. (London: Novello, 1, Berners Street.) 6d.—Every one who knows the Archdeacon of Suffolk will rejoice to help him. He asks help just now, in a curious but right musical way, and in a manner which, we heartily hope, may secure to him much success. The villagers are anxious, as well as the Rector, to repair and thoroughly restore their bells; but they have neither a squire nor a wealthy landlord. So they went to work, and got up a 'village concert,' and the Rector (the Archdeacon) wrote a very pretty song of seven verses, and set it to a very pretty tune, also of his own composing. The words are supposed to be the utterance of the bells, in which they describe their varied offices. They also make their humble and earnest appeal for restoration as they plead:

'Lest these voices should be silent,
 Friends, your succour we implore,
 To renew us, to restore us,
 Chiming, ringing, as before.'

Let our readers shower down their sixpences, and so secure copies of this pretty little song with its music, which is well worth the money, and so help the good villagers and their good Rector in their good effort. Wherever Church restoration is proceeding, and bells or belfry fall within the contract, this song would come in well at any concert which may be got up for the purpose of obtaining funds for the object in view. We congratulate Archdeacon Groome upon the happy idea of his song, and upon the very admirable manner in which he has given effect to it.

Published: 12.iv.1884

BELL-RINGERS' CONFERENCE AT THE WEST-STREET HALL, READING.

A CONFERENCE of persons interested in Belfry Reform took place on Thursday in last week at the West-Street Hall, Reading, and was attended by a considerable number of clergy from all parts of the country. The Right Hon. Earl Nelson presided, and the Rev. Dolben Paul, Rector of Bearwood (Secretary and Treasurer of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell-ringers), was also on the platform. After prayer, offered by Mr. Paul,

The noble *Chairman* said he regretted that their meeting was taking place during the Congress sessions, but he thought it was such an important matter that he had consented to preside. Unhappily they were deprived of the presence of a very active bell-ringer, or rather a man who took a great interest in the Association—Archdeacon Emery, who particularly requested him to tell them that as he was permanent secretary to the Church Congress it was impossible for him to take part in the meeting. Archdeacon Emery also wished him to tell them of the work done in belfry reform in the diocese of Ely and in the Archdeaconry of Bedford, and to mention the great loss bell-ringers had sustained in the death of the Rev. G. H. Harris, who had worked so hard in the question of belfry reform in the diocese of Norwich. As to the subject before them, it had his (the *Chairman's*) deepest sympathy. The revival of spiritual life in the Church had taken a great many forms, and happily they had reason to believe that every one of them—both clergy and laity—had a great duty to perform. They should help forward the work which God had entrusted to them in raising their fellow-man and sanctifying all the powers which God had given them. In the olden time they had ringers and choirs, but they were very indifferent, because they were neglected. The object the Association had in view was to take them by the hand and impart to them knowledge where they required it, and to make them feel that they were consecrated to God. It must be done judiciously, and they must always have before them the recollection that Church bell-ringing was for the honour and glory of God.

The Rev. A. du Boulay Hill, Vicar of Downton, Salisbury, read a paper on 'Bell-ringing Associations, their Objects and Organization,' in which he spoke of the dilapidated state of many of the belfries of churches, and urged that ringers and bells should be more cared for. He recommended that prizes be offered to encourage bell-ringers, and that the ringers be paid for their services.

The Rev. C. D. P. Davies, of Chaceley, Tewkesbury, followed with a carefully prepared paper on 'Change-ringing in connexion with Bell-ringing Associations.' He spoke of the desirability of promoting change-ringing, and urged all in authority in Church matters to foster ringing as far as possible. Let ringers feel that they were taking part in God's service, and they would then take a greater interest in the work.

Mr. G. Holmes, of Harleston, Norfolk, a bell-ringer and bell-founder, next spoke on the relations of the clergy to the bell-ringers.

The Rev. F. E. Robinson, of Drayton, near Abingdon, said this was the first occasion on which bell-ringers had been recognised at any Church Congress, and he considered that a sign of progress. He thought bell-ringers' advice should be taken by persons who were about to hang bells and to erect towers, and that there should be guilds of ringers in various parts of the country to whom reference could be made. He also recommended the formation of a central association, and the holding of periodical meetings of representatives from the guilds. They would then awaken more interest in the scientific use of bells. A good practical committee should be formed to carry out the objects of the associations.

Mr. C. C. Child, Master of the Oxford University Society of Change-ringers, having said a few words,

The Hon. the Rev. J. H. Nelson, Rector of Shaw-cum-Donnington, Newbury, in a brief address said the mention of the name of the late Rev. G. H. Harris (who was formerly his curate) had filled his heart with many feelings of regret and affection. Mr. Harris was his closest and most intimate companion when he was with him in Norfolk, and he bore testimony to the time and labour he bestowed in the work of belfry reform. He expressed a fervent hope that the ringers would still continue to hold fast to their old Church, and that they would not only be ringers, but would hold fast the faith which they professed, fearing God and keeping His commandments.

Captain Acland-Troyte, of Chester Street, London, apologised for the unavoidable absence of several leading gentlemen interested in belfry reform, including Mr. Jasper Snowdon of Leeds, and Mr. Coleridge.

The Rev. T. Archer Turner (Burnley), a member of the Lancashire Association of Change-ringers, gave some good practical advice, mentioning several rules which should be laid down in conducting the ringing of bells.

Mr. G. Holmes said he thought their meeting must necessarily be looked upon as a preliminary one, and they should now form a committee to consider the subject during the next twelve months. He proposed:—

'That a committee be appointed to frame a scheme for the formation of a national association of bell-ringers, such scheme to be sent for the approval of the various associations hitherto formed.'

He suggested the names of a number of gentlemen to form the committee, with power to add to their number.

After a conversation as to the gentlemen who should constitute the committee, the proposition (which was seconded by the Rev. A. du Boulay Hill) was put and unanimously agreed to.

The Rev. F. E. Robinson moved a cordial vote of thanks to the noble Chairman for presiding, and this was carried with enthusiasm.

The Chairman acknowledged the compliment, saying that he considered the result of the meeting would be greatly to advance the cause of bell-ringing.

During the day diagrams of a new invention to prevent injury to bells from the ordinary chiming apparatus were exhibited in the hall, and a peal of hand-bells was also provided for use. In the evening the bells of St. Laurence and St. Mary's churches were rung by some of those attending the meeting.

Published: 13.x.1883

Bell-ringing Conference.

SIR,—In the notice of the Bell-ringers' Conference at Reading on Thursday, Oct. 4th, quoted from the Reading local paper, the reporter has sadly misrepresented one of the main objects of the paper with which I had the honour to be entrusted. Far from recommending that prizes should be given to encourage ringers, I maintained with, I believe, the unanimous approval of the meeting, that such a practice is fatal to the true principles on which ringers should be led to devote their work to God's service. I would urge rural deans to report, and archdeacons to inhibit, such degradation of church bells. I welcome some signs of improvement in the character of such meetings in my own county of Cornwall; but while I am fully sensible of the desirability of encouragement for country ringers, and of the zealous practice that friendly rivalry excites, I would plead for the separation of true from false methods of encouragement. I desire to add the voice of our first Bell-ringers' Conference to the protest so often heard from your columns against the great belfry abuse of prize-ringing matches. A. DU B. HILL. *Downton Vicarage, Salisbury.*

Published: 20.x.1883

ON Sunday services were held in Prestwich parish church in connexion with the approaching completion of the tower, and the resumption of the ringing of the old ring of bells, for which the church has long been celebrated. The dangerous condition of the tower was discovered in 1880, and a complete and highly satisfactory restoration has been carried out. A vast

platform of concrete has been placed beneath the tower. The decayed, cracked, and broken stones have been removed, and replaced by sound ones, well bonded in. The tower is now stronger and more stable than it has been probably at any previous period of its history. The western gallery has been removed, and the fine tower arch and windows thrown open to the church. The church appears to be lined internally, with small exceptions, with a beautiful soft pearly-grey coloured stone. In the tower and in the west end bay of the nave this stone-work has been exposed to view by stripping the plaster. The ancient oak ceilings of nave and chancel have been carefully restored, and the roofs strengthened, repaired, and re-slated. New oak roofs are being placed in the north and south aisles in lieu of the much-decayed old timber, but the old design has been strictly followed. Designs have likewise been made and a faculty obtained for the enlargement of the vestry and for a new organ-chamber. The services on Sunday attracted very large congregations, many coming from Middleton, Oldham, and other distant parts of the extensive parish of which St. Mary's, Prestwich, is the mother church. The old ring of six bells (with the exception of one which has been recast) commenced ringing a merry peal of single thirds at eight o'clock in the morning, the ringing being continued at various hours throughout the day. The bells, which are remarkable for their 'silvery sweetness,' were heard with beautiful effect in the valley of the Irwell and all over the surrounding country. Sermons were preached in the morning by the Rev. Foster G. Blackburne, M.A., rector of Nantwich; in the afternoon by the Rev. Herbert Bury, M.A., senior curate; and in the evening by the Rev. Waldegrave Brewster, M.A., rector of Middleton and rural dean.

Published: 12.iv.1884

ON Sunday last, the 17th inst., the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe, the respected Rector of Clyst St. George, returned public thanks that it had pleased the Almighty to spare him to enter his ninety-sixth year in health and senses. We understand that he generally reads the Lessons for the day 'distinctly, and with an audible voice, standing' at the eagle lectern, and 'turning himself as he may best be heard of all such as are present.'—*Devon and Exeter Daily Gazette*, May 19th.

Published: 29.v.1885

The ancient bells of the Cathedral of Armagh, which were long out of tune, have been re-cast and re-hung, to the great delight of the inhabitants. On Tuesday the music of some well-known hymns was chimed forth from the Cathedral towers, and wafted far and wide over the city. A new bell, to complete the full peal of eight, has just been hung in the tower of Lurgan parish church.

Published: 18.xii.1885

Aid required.

SIR,—The City of New Westminster, British Columbia, possesses a fine ring of eight bells, the only ring, I believe, on the Pacific coast of America, but, unhappily, though carefully protected from weather, lying on the ground unhung. In the year 1866 the church of Holy Trinity, New Westminster, was burnt down; the bell-tower and bells, however, escaped destruction. The church was partially rebuilt, but funds were not forthcoming for the repair of the wood bell-tower, and a few years later the bells had to be lowered to the ground, the structure being pronounced unsafe. The Bishop of New Westminster (the first Bishop of the separate diocese), the Archdeacon, who is also Rector of the parish, and other influential residents, have been bestirring themselves towards the erection of a substantial bell-tower. Plans have been furnished gratuitously by an eminent architect of San Francisco for the erection of a church which shall eventually take the place of the present inconvenient structure, and be worthy of the 'Royal City.' The members of the church are not a wealthy community, and it is beyond their power, without extraneous help, to build even the tower. To complete the entire church as designed must be a work of the future, but they fully intend that, by God's help, it is to be completed. The present work to be undertaken is the bell-tower, and on behalf of those who hail from the old country and have tender memories of rings of bells associated with Christmas, Easter, and every other Christian festival, I appeal to my fellow-readers of *Church Bells* to aid us. I can assure them that the people here will not be lacking according to their means, but in a new colony, where it is a struggle for bare existence, much cannot be done. The names of donors may be unknown to future generations, but none the less will they have their reward in the wholesome pleasure afforded to those who, from far and near, will listen to the sweet sounds floating over hill and dale. Contributions will be received by the Rev. H. H. Mogg, Donlting, Shepton Mallet, who will have a supply of coloured lithographed drawings of the proposed church for sale, at 5s. each, towards the cost. JUSTINIAN PELLY,
New Westminster, Canada, March 5th, 1885.

Published: 1.v.1885

AT St. Saviour's, Eastbourne, the *Guardian* states, Easter Eve was ushered in by a fine peal of eight bells, which had been completed at an expense of 200*l.*, an offering from the young authoress known as 'Edna Lyall.' The three new bells bear the names of the heroes of her books—'Donovan,' 'Eric,' and 'Hugo.'

Published: 7.v.1886

Annoyance from Church Bells.

SIR,—Will any of your readers kindly send me a line or two giving me information on the following subjects?
1. The name of any church containing a ring of bells in which, from whatever structural or other causes, the sound of the bells strikes the houses in the immediate vicinity with so great an effect as to be in the nature of a nuisance to the inhabitants, and even in cases where the bells and their music are admired.
2. What mechanical or structural plans, if any, have been adopted in the bell-chamber to prevent the annoyance, and with what success?
Any information will be gladly received by GEORGE SUTHERLAND,
St. Andrew's, Derby. Churchwarden.

Published: 21.v.1886

HYMN FOR DEDICATION OF BELLS.—The Rev. T. F. Lane, The Rectory, Beaconsfield, asks if any of our readers can supply him with the words of a hymn used at the dedication of a ring of bells which is something like this:—
'Now at last our bells are hoisted,
Swing midst the earth and sky.'

Published: 2.viii.1884

'HYMN FOR DEDICATION OF BELLS.'—The Rev. G. W. Cole writes:—'If the following words,— 'Now at length our bells are mounted
To their holy place on high,'
be those inquired for by the Rev. T. F. Lane, they may be found in the Appendix of *Change-ringers' Guide to the Steeple of England* (Wells Gardner, 1879); and perhaps in later volumes.

Published: 9.viii.1884

A FAIRLY large crowd assembled in the neighbourhood of St. Paul's Cathedral towards midnight on Wednesday to hear the bells ring the old year out and the new year in. Despite the coldness of the night, and the wind that seems always to make itself felt in this locality, little knots of people began to group themselves in the vicinity of the sacred edifice as early as eleven o'clock, and waited patiently for the bells to peal forth. They ceased for a short interval, during which the clock struck twelve, and then broke forth again in triumphant notes to greet the New Year. The bells of several of the other City churches were rung in celebration of the advent of the New Year.

Published: 2.i.1885

THE bell presented by Mr. Gladstone to St. Seiriol's Church, Penmaenmawr, was hung on Tuesday in the tower, the erection of which at the cost of the parishioners the Premier made a condition of his gift. It is hoped that Mr. Gladstone will be present at the consecration ceremony, which will take place towards the close of this month.

Published: 12.vi.1885

A SPECIAL service was held on Monday at St. Sario'l's Church, Penmaenmawr, to mark the presentation of a bell by Mr. Gladstone. Some eleven years ago the ex-Premier, speaking at the luncheon which followed the opening of the church, directed attention to the incomplete character of the edifice, there being neither bell nor a tower, and offered to provide the former conditionally upon the parishioners erecting the latter. The Bishop of Bangor preached.

Published: 17.vii.1885

A Tower wanted for a Ring of Bells.

SIR,—*Church Bells* must surely be the proper organ for making known the want above stated. Great efforts are being made to rearrange, improve, and, if possible, enlarge by a chancel, the at present miserably inadequate church of Holy Trinity, Tredegar Square, E. The parishioners are very anxious about it, and are doing what they can; but they have little wealth among them, and we fear the much-needed chancel is a dream of the impossible. But a gentleman has offered a ring of bells if any one will build a tower to put them in. Now there is a chance for the readers of *Church Bells*. I shall be glad to give any information, and so will the Vicar, the Rev. T. Greaves, W. WALSHAM BENFORD, Bishop-Suffragan for East London, *Stainforth House, Upper Clapton, E.*

Published: 15.i.1886

WHILE a man named Charles Jones was ringing the sermon bell at Stanton Lacey Church, near Ludlow, on Sunday morning, the stay of the bell broke and the bell was overturned. The rope, which Jones had twisted round one of his wrists, pulled him up to the ceiling, from which he fell heavily to the belfry floor. He was so severely injured that he died on Sunday morning.

Published: 12.ii.1886

An Appeal for a Church Bell.

SIR,—May I appeal through your valuable paper for the gift of a bell for a temporary iron church which is soon about to be opened in Kentish Town? The church will be free and open, and when finished will seat about 900 persons, the majority of whom are of the working classes, and although those at present attending the services at the Mission-room have given the utmost in their power, a large deficiency still has to be met for the necessary expenses for the fittings, lighting, &c., of the building, and a bell especially would be most thankfully received before the church is opened.
Highbury House, Hampstead. H. K. FRANKLIN SMITH.

Published: 19.ii.1886

Nuisance of Church Bells.

SIR,—Seeing Mr. Sutherland's letter in your issue of the 21st inst., I venture to ask a more general question on the same subject. How are we to reconcile our subscribers to the ringing of peals which take two and three and more hours to ring? Nine people out of ten are very pleased with the sound for an hour, but regard anything beyond that as only a feat of endurance on the part of the ringers. It need not be an exceptionally nervous person to feel the unbroken peal, for such a period, close at hand, too much of a good thing, even though it be very occasional. EAST ANGLIAN VICAR.

Published: 28.v.1886

Nuisance of Church Bells.

SIR,—Mr. Sutherland's difficulty is no new one, but it is worthy of more discussion than it has yet received. It is not a matter of mere local grievance, but of great and general interest to all who rejoice in the music of bells. Your correspondent will probably be told that any confinement of the sound by a filling in of the belfry windows will ruin the tone of the bells. Also that the best bells must of necessity be loud, and that the few sensitive persons to whom their sound is painful ought to remove their habitation from them to such a respectful 'distance' as shall add 'enchantment' to the sound.

The science of bell-founding is necessarily limited, comparatively very few persons; and it is difficult, if not dangerous, for an 'Idiot' to express an opinion, lest he should be written down an Idiot. A great deal, however, will be gained if a little information can be elicited upon this special element in the English bell-founding of the present day, as compared with one's experience of Belgium and other countries. The modern system of designing the form and proportions of the bell is not exactly the same as under the early mediæval system; and I have good reason to believe that, according to the modern practice, bells are designed to be heard very much further than the early bells were, in proportion to their weight; and that they may, therefore, naturally and fairly be termed more 'noisy.' The true pitch of a bell, depending upon the relation of the 'waist' to the 'lip,' is not necessarily limited to one fixed proportion, though at the present day I believe that the proportion is commonly considered to be a fixed one for a perfect bell. In the good old days the 'waist' was smaller, and the sound less powerful, whether more musical or not; and I cannot but believe that much may be done by a well-considered recurrence to early precedent in this respect. It is not derogating from the perfection of the pitch to be found in a modern peal, to suggest that there may possibly be room for some improvement in the tone. The hardness, or harshness, or noise, of the majority of modern bells has created a prejudice and aversion in many persons to the use of bells in towns; and it is in this direction we should turn in dealing with the difficulties of a powerful ring. In some cases, at

least, there might be a small subsidiary, and probably more musical ring put up for ordinary use, which would be, to a great extent, free from the nuisance now very often complained of.

Should my heretical notions provoke some scientific enthusiast in the art of bell-founding, I can only hope that he will be able to lend a helping hand in my very deferential endeavour to 'Ring out the false, ring in the true.'

WILLIAM WHITE, F.S.A.

Wimpole Street, W.

Published: 4.vi.1886

Nuisance of Church Bells.

SIR,—I hope you will allow me a further small space for this interesting and popular subject. For an occasional high holiday, or a joyous season, a moderate amount of scientific ringing may not prove a nuisance even to near neighbours. At any rate it might be tolerated. For ordinary Church services, however, the chime, whether in sequence or in melody, is apparently to ordinary mortals more musical than peal-ringing; on account, perhaps, of its more rapid succession, as well as modified sound. If the tone can be modified by an improved form in the bell itself, this result will be all the more acceptable. But 'Othello's occupation is gone' if an embargo be laid upon the ardent lover of his peal, or upon the din of his constant practice. For constant practice the 'silent ringing' with lashed clappers, as suggested by Mr. Goslin, would, no doubt, be gratefully received. But, in many cases, with a clapper muffled both sides with leather, might not the 'noise' be sufficiently obviated to allay the nuisance, without wholly destroying the music, or abridging the liberty of the performer?

All this, however, is quite beside any question as to the bell itself, and how far its loudness, as well as its key-note, may depend upon its several proportions, apart from its mere weight. As regards the proportions of the bell, and especially the thickness of its metal at the waist, I hoped we might have had some more scientific and more practical information. But, so far as I understand it, the waist is now made of thicker metal than it was of old, and this thickening not only allows of, but requires, a heavier clapper to bring out its (consequently louder) tone. At all events, I know that some years ago one of the three or four bell-founders best known in England persisted on two occasions in recasting the mediæval bell, against all expostulations, supported though they were by the advice and aid of my old friend Mr. Ellacombe, rather than take a little more trouble to harmonise the new bells with the old. The ostensible excuse was not at all that it would be difficult or impracticable, but merely, 'What is the good of keeping a nasty narrow-waisted thing like that, which cannot be heard outside the churchyard?'

This was, at least, a very simple and plain declaration, from a scientific source, that whatever sweetness, whatever mellowness, the old bell might possess, its unpardonable sin lay only in its lack of noise. Possibly also the founder would not like the evidences of ancient superiority to survive, to clash with his own work; and he would naturally regard as perfect and complete the traditional system under which he had for so many years, so satisfactorily to himself, produced new peals. The narrowness of which he spoke no doubt was meant to refer as well to the thinness of the metal as to the diameter of the waist of the bell; perhaps also to an unqualified and interfering stickler for antiquated forms.

The music of a bell is a compound of sounds from two separate sources. The key-note is determined by the thickness of the metal at the sound-bow in proportion to its circumference; and it is essential to the correctness of note that the sound at the waist should be similar to, or in harmony with, that at the rim. Upon this depends also the perfect resonance of the bell. If the waist be reduced, the substance of metal is proportionally reduced likewise. The weight of the bell is reduced also. It will not take so heavy a clapper, nor produce so loud a tone. I know that there is a bell-founder in England, perhaps the only one, whose musical instincts have led him (or misled him) to leave the beaten track of the traditional system, and enabled him to produce more musical and less costly peals. These peals may be less

powerful, and may be wanting, perhaps, in the clear sharp ring which is heard in the far distance on a calm summer's eve, but which may not be so distracting to neighbouring urban or suburban dwellers thickly congregated in their vicinity.

I have ventured to speak of cost. We have often been warned against the false economy of attempting to save a few pounds' weight of metal in a ring of bells. Economy, however, does not come at all necessarily into the question. It is really a question of distributing the same weight of metal into a form less powerful, though more agreeable to the great majority of the lovers of bell-music.

Pray let us hear what bell-ringers and bell-founders may have to say to this.

WILLIAM WHITE, F.S.A.

80A Wimpole Street, June 22nd.

Published: 2.vii.1886

Nuisance of Church Bells.

SIR,—I should be at fault if I did not acknowledge my indebtedness in the past to Mr. White's instruction in ecclesiastical art metal-work subjects, and now I fancy if I did not take up one or two points in his admirable letter upon the above topic, I should like to say that I have seen many early mediæval bells which were as near as may be of the same proportions as the bells of some founders of the present day. I have also seen many bells of very early times, which were longer or higher from lip to shoulder than those before mentioned of the present and early times. It should be borne in mind, when speaking or writing of powerful sounding or noisy bells, that in early mediæval times in England, or as it may be at the present time in Belgium, bells were not and are not rung in peals of scientific changes, but were and are chimed with softer blows, which to some ears and nerves are the more appreciated. It does not follow, however, that the moderately thick or Continental bells may not be used so as to be called noisy; one has only to visit Vienna, and to be near to some principal church on a festival, to find to one's misery that the ordinarily soft chiming or tolling bells have become noisy, turbulent, and much more distracting and wild than an English ring of bells when in the 'go' of a long peal of 'Caters,' 'Major,' or 'Maximus.' There remains the law for those who are too frequently or too much disturbed by the constant ringing of bells in a church tower; and the means to prevent the nuisance is the adoption in constant practice of silent ringing apparatus with lashed clappers, and the substitution of chiming in place of ringing for church services or for prayers, which in many cases has been appreciated, in more ways than the one in relation to noise.

S. B. GOSLIN.

Published: 11.vi.1886

Nuisance of Church Bells.

SIR,—If I may be allowed yet another short note in further reference to our friend Mr. W. White's present theme, and some few words in reply to his queries, I shall esteem it as a favour. It does not follow that the liberty of the performer must be abridged if the clappers be tied or otherwise secured, as they are in some cases, or may be in all cases easily and quickly, with the ingenious arrangement of Mr. Dale, when the bells are to be used for silent ringing practice, especially if Sease's small bell apparatus is provided to give the *quiet* sounds in the belfry to the performers when in the full *go* of exercise. I am inclined to conclude that muffled clappers for practice-ringing would be objectionable to the public, being associated with deaths and funerals, as well as far more troublesome and less effective than the now well-known arrangements I have alluded to, and which it would appear that Mr. Sutherland was seeking. As to the proportions of bells, thicknesses, widths of waists, heights to shoulders, &c., I suppose that those who, like myself, have been in daily contact with the founding of bells for every conceivable taste and requirement for some years, can answer that the present proportions are those which are suited to the varied requirements, and are well understood by present founders; those, too, who have, like myself, corresponded frequently as to mediæval bells from nearly every county in England with our late friend the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe, have had opportunities of observing that these bells differed in proportions according to the conclusions of the then founders and their friends and the local ideas of requirements. I would venture to suggest that Mr. White should have pointed out that, 'if the waist of a bell be reduced and the substance of the bell be proportionately reduced beyond a certain limit, the bell then will sound like a pan, or, as it is termed, "panny."'

It may be remembered that some time since a request was made for an English founder to produce a set of carillons for Bishop Steer, for Zanzibar Cathedral, and price was a great object to be studied. The question was taken up by the firm with which I have been long connected, and with considerable pleasure I marked out those bells upon different proportions to ordinary ringing bells, and made them with longer waists and thinner sound-bows and proportions; but in this matter it was proved well how much care is needed to adjust proportions to diameters, to avoid the panny sounds, and to secure those which may, if the performers please, produce sweet tones, soft music, no noise and jangle, if they will it to be so. There is no difficulty in carrying out the problem proposed by Mr. White in founding the bells, but the noise or music of them must be left to their exercise and use by the performers. Mr. Sutherland may see the apparatus I have referred to at St. John's, Wilton Road, Pimlico, London; at St. Mary Magdalene, Enfield, Middlesex; or at St. Peter's, Brighton, Sussex—if he should by chance go that way.

T. B. GOSLIN.

Crescent Foundry, Cripplegate, E.C.

Published: 9.vii.1886

The Nuisance of Church Bells.

SIR,—I see Mr. White is writing to you about the 'Nuisance of Church Bells.' If taken in its literal sense, is not this applicable only to the dwellers in the immediate neighbourhood? On this account I have often thought, that either by making the loofers of the belfry movable like a Venetian blind, or else by shutting the loofers and opening a somewhat similar structure in the roof of the tower, the music could be directed more towards heaven and less towards earth, causing the inhabitants of the latter less annoyance. He himself ought to be able to give an opinion upon this.

Gratwicke Hall, July 12, 1886.

F. W.

Published: 16.vii.1886

Nuisance of Church Bells.

SIR,—We observe that your columns are open to a discussion upon the alleged nuisance of Church Bell-ringing. Some would-be scientific principles as to the form and shape of bells, intended to lead people to imagine that loud or soft tones are produced by such occult means, we pass over with a smile, for it is utter nonsense. We have refrained from giving an opinion until we saw a really capable letter on the subject. Your correspondent, 'F. W.,' has 'hit the right nail on the head.' We humbly, but emphatically, endorse and support his sensible 'thought' as to how bell-music may be rendered sweet and enjoyable; that is, prevent as much as possible the sound escaping from side-openings, but conduct it upwards—to put it plainly, have neither windows nor roof. We know that to a certain extent this, for obvious reasons, cannot be carried out, but our advice is an endorsement of F. W.'s opinion: carry it out as far as is consistent with other requirements.

JOHN TAYLOR & CO.

Bell Foundry, Loughborough, July 19th, 1886.

Published: 30.vii.1886

The Nuisance of Church Bells.

SIR,—The apparently sensible suggestion that the noise of church bells may be abated by allowing escape for the sound upwards, and by closing lateral exits, would, if carried out, go a great way towards mitigating the evil which has led to the present correspondence. But this does not touch the question of needless noisiness in the structure of the bell. When Messrs. Taylor can maintain that the loudness of a bell on the one hand, or its resonance on the other, will depend in no way upon the relations of diameter and weight of metal at the waist to those at the lip, which give the key-note, and when they can 'smile at the idea' of its loudness or softness depending in any way upon the scientific principles which dictate its proportions and form, it certainly is not the ignorant or the unscientific alone who would hold such a 'ludicrous and childish' delusion. But, if it be a delusion, what could have ever induced Messrs. Taylor on any occasion to recast an early mediæval bell, *merely* on the ground of its being inaudible *through its imperfect form*, unless indeed they have arrived, since that day, at a more practical (I will refrain from saying scientific) knowledge on such matters?

WILLIAM WHITE, F.S.A.

Gimmetwold, August 5.

Published: 20.viii.1886

Bell-ringing Societies.

SIR,—Having seen in your issue of April 9th, a paragraph relating to the best method of organizing a class of bell-ringers, and inviting further hints on the subject, I venture, as one who has acted as secretary for some years to a society of voluntary ringers to offer the following suggestions, if you think it worth your while to insert them.

The great difficulty, according to my experience, is not of making a beginning, but of continuing satisfactorily. It is comparatively easy to get men to join the Society, but quite another thing to keep them to it when the novelty of the thing has worn off. The difficulty is increased of course in the case of lads of the age at which you recommend they should begin. In a town-parish especially, the variety of amusements and counter-attractions are likely to prove a serious obstacle to young men in the way of regular attendance at practice and steady application. Something may be done towards making the Society more attractive, if, as has been done here, a set of hand-bells could be procured, which might be made a source of amusement and occasionally of profit, and also be a valuable acquisition at parochial entertainments. I should also suggest the advisability of training up a second class to take the place of those who have already become efficient to take their place as they fall out. But so far as I can see, there is only one true way of meeting the difficulty of unsteadiness inherent in voluntary Associations, and that is to inculcate the necessity of acting from a sense of duty. Those who have the management of the Society should endeavour to get a real hold of the men from the first, and bring religious influence to bear upon them, so as to raise them above the terrible 'nought for nought' principle, which is at the bottom of the mischief. Let the members of the Society be taught to feel their responsibility and regard their position in something like its proper light; looking on themselves as fellow-labourers together with the ministers and choir, and all other church workers, for the glory of God. Of course it is hard to instil such ideas into young men; but I believe much might be done if the clergyman, or some other competent person in the parish, would himself become a ringer and undertake to form the young men into a Bible-class on Sundays,—meeting say in the ringing-room previous to ringing the bells for service. I have not been able to see this realised amongst us yet, though it has long been a cherished ambition of mine. It is desirable, too, that the congregation should be encouraged to take more interest in the ringing and look with a more favourable eye on the ringers. There is still a good deal of that feeling abroad which has given rise to the saying, 'From singers and ringers, good Lord deliver us.' A little cold water thrown on the Society from without will soon extinguish any little sparks of enthusiasm their leader may have succeeded in kindling amongst its members, whereas a little encouragement goes a long way in

helping to keep up their interest in their work. I am strongly opposed to the system of payment, as tending to destroy the very principle of voluntary service I should like to see inculcated. If anything is done by the congregation, let it be in support of a reserve fund, or at least let it take the form of a subscription to something that will promote the general good of the Society.

I have ventured to offer these suggestions, hoping that they may be the means of eliciting further discussion of some of the points I have touched on.

49 Florin Street, Pendleton, April 21.

HENRY SEDDON.

Published: 7.v.1886

Bell-Ringing Societies.

SIR,—I quite agree with your correspondent, Mr. H. Seddon, as to the easiness of forming a society of ringers, and the difficulty of keeping it together when formed. I do not agree with him, though, in most of his other remarks. I strongly disapprove of a clergyman simply taking up ringing as a sort of parochial duty, without any real love for the science of change-ringing. I am happy to say we have at the present time a few of the clergy who really go in for the art thoroughly: otherwise the peal of SIXTEEN TRIPLES rung by the clerical company in 1884, at Drayton, would never have been accomplished. But, on the other hand, we have a host of 'clerical dabblers' in the art, some of whom can just ring rounds, whilst others can just manage to tumble through a six-score of DOUBLES or a short length of MINOR or TRIPLES. Now I do not want to say a word against any clerical beginner in the art who really aspires to attain to greater proficiency; but I do most strongly condemn the idea that it is the duty of a parish priest to take up ringing just to give countenance to the thing without having any real taste for it. So much for the subject, looking at it from a change-ringing point of view. Now, as regards the provision for the bells being rung on all occasions when they ought to be heard apart from the science altogether; to ensure this you must have a regular paid company (change-ringers by all means, if you can get them; but if not, you must put up with 'stoneys'). A voluntary company is all very well where you can secure regularity. But the case is just this: if you pay for a thing it becomes a legal contract, and you can have it done when and how you please. If you employ volunteers, it is only reasonable to suppose that they will work only when and how they please. As regards payment for ringing-days, this must vary in amount according to circumstances. In the case of a town where there are several churches with rings of bells, it is better that one company should serve all the churches, as the amount paid by each church separately is generally not enough, by itself, to compensate the men for loss of time in attending to ring. The list of ringing-days must also depend upon local circumstances, but generally in every place these should include the four great Church festivals, Christmas, Easter, Ascension Day, and Whit Sunday, and one or two local occasions, such as the Queen's Birthday, Coronation, &c. To sum the matter up: payment will never further the art of change-ringing, but it will secure ringing of some sort on all occasions when required. As regards rules, the fewer the better. A list of ringing-days should be included therein. It is an insult to a body of respectable men to stick up rules as to conduct in the belfry. Of course it would be an understood thing that a man smoking or drinking in a belfry, or otherwise grossly misconducting himself, would be dismissed at once.

J. R. JERRAM.

Published: 14.v.1886

SIR,—I can quite understand the feeling which prompts your correspondent, Mr. J. R. Jerram, to deprecate anything that seems to savour of 'patronising' the art for which he is evidently an enthusiast. At the same time, looking at the matter from a practical point of view, I cannot see any real objection to a clergyman, or any one else who pleases, taking up bell-ringing as a pastime, even if he aspires to nothing more than to be able to ring plain rounds *well*. It is all very well to sneer at what he calls 'a host of clerical dabblers.' But he cannot expect every man to become an expert at everything he puts his hand to. And surely it is absurd to suppose that a clergyman is to take no part in any of the numerous interests that engage his flock unless he is prepared to make a hobby of them. Is he, for example, to take no part or interest in the choir, or any other musical society, unless he aspires to a thorough knowledge of the science of music? It seems to me that your correspondent starts from a wrong principle. It is clear from the whole tone of his letter that he places change-ringing first and service-ringing second. Now I should like to ask what he thinks, in the majority of cases at least, church bells were given for? What was the object the donor had in view? Was it to further the art of change-ringing, or was it that a ring of bells might assemble the people of the parish to church at the hours of Divine service? In my humble opinion it would be better, and more in accordance with the wishes of the donors, to have plain rounds rung for service by a voluntary set of steady, well-principled men, who have some regard for what they are doing, than to have the most faultless change-ringing accomplished by men paid for the job, who, after they have assembled the people to church, proceed to put their own comment on the work by walking off elsewhere just as the service begins. I do not wish to say anything that may sound like a disparagement of change-ringing as a science, but I think that in the case of church bells the science should be subordinated to the end for which the bells were put there.

H. SEDDON.

Published: 4.vi.1886

Bell-Ringing Societies.

SIR,—Two interesting letters on the subject of ‘Bell-ringing Societies’ lately appeared in the columns of *Church Bells*. They were suggested by the publication in the ringing column of hints as to the formation of, and rules for, parochial companies of ringers. With much of what Mr. Seddon says I heartily agree. Nothing can be more true than his opening remark as to the easiness of getting a band together, the great difficulty being to continue satisfactorily. His suggestion that the ringers might be formed into a class for instruction, to meet in the belfry—say, half an hour—before ringing time, appears most excellent, and one which might in good hands be productive of much good in many ways. The idea is, I think, too, quite a new one. With one observation made by Mr. Seddon I am inclined to disagree. He thinks that handbells might ‘occasionally’ be made ‘a source of profit.’ If by this he intends to condone in the least a going round from house to house at Christmas time, or at any other time, I feel compelled to differ from him most strongly. Such a habit is productive of all manner of evil to the ringers, in ways superfluous to mention, and is a general nuisance to outsiders. But if Mr. Seddon has in mind cases where the men are specially invited, though my opposition is by no means so strenuous, still, as an out-and-out change-ringer, I should feel inclined to throw cold water upon it. Handbells are indispensable, but always let them be kept as much as possible for change-ringing. Otherwise, they are apt simply to add one more to that ‘variety of amusements and counter-attractions’ alluded to by Mr. Seddon. And, besides, would not such a scheme be at least a leaning towards the system of payment, in condemning which I earnestly unite with Mr. Seddon?

Turning to Mr. Jerram’s letter, I find much with which I cannot agree. He speaks of clerical ‘dabblers’ in the art of change-ringing ‘tumbling through’ a six-score. Ten thousand times better this, say I, than never to look at or take an interest in the ringers at all. Of course, no clergyman of sense, not to mention gentlemanly feeling, would insist on taking up the whole practice-time of his men simply for his own amusement, and to the retarding of their progress. But every one must begin by ‘tumbling through’ a six-score, and there are thousands of ordinary ringers who never get any farther. Added to this, I have failed to come across any considerable portion of this ‘host of dabblers.’ And then, as to the payment of ringers. Mr. Jerram seems to look on ringing—change-ringing, I mean—as wholly and solely a pastime—a sport, in fact. On festivals and Sundays any sort of noise will do; in plain language, anything will do for Almighty God. He seems to lose sight of the fact that on such days we ought to render our best, not because So-and-so can, or cannot, hear it or understand it, but simply because it is our best. And if we are paid for what we give to God, when the giving costs nothing (almost the only day in the year when ringing is a loss in money being Ascension Day), where is any service or offering to Him?

Far better never have it done at all than have it done for pay. And far better have no ringing at all than ‘stoney’ when there is a resident band of change-ringers in the place. Of course, in these observations I have not been alluding to ringing for weddings, and much less to ringing for any State occasion or local fête. I have simply been speaking of ringing on Sundays and Church festivals.

If I have put anything too strongly, I hope Mr. Jerram will forgive me, but I feel that it is a subject on which the trumpet should give no uncertain sound.

CHARLES D. P. DAVIES.

Published: 4.vi.1886

THE Duke of Westminster intends to provide a complete ring of bells and an organ for the new church which he is building, and which will shortly be completed, in the parish of St. Mary, Chester. The bells will cost over 700l., and the organ 500l.

Published: 7.i.1887

ON Tuesday a complete peal of bells, eight in number, arrived for the tower of the new church of St. Mary, Chester, which, together with a rectory and schools, the Duke of Westminster is building at a cost of over 30,000l.

Published: 25.iii.1887

Sunday Bell-ringing.

SIR,—May I ask you kindly to insert in your next impression the few following thoughts, which were suggested to me after a conversation I had with a great friend of mine, who is a great ringer, some few weeks ago?

It appears that a doubt exists in the minds of some ringers as to the advisability of ringing peals on Sunday. I confess I was much surprised to find that this was the case, for it has always been my humble opinion that Sunday was a proper day for church bell-ringing. My reasons for so thinking are as follows:—

The church bells are part of the church furniture. They are as much consecrated to the service of God as the organ, and, like the organ, are intended to show forth the Lord’s Day, the weekly commemoration of the glorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Surely our weekly practisings should be held with a special view to our Sunday’s ringing of praise, in the same way that our weekly choir practices are held, that the Sunday Service of Song may be decently and reverently rendered? What can be more important to hold before the eye of the young ringer than the fact that he is learning the art of ringing, not only because it is an exercise good for his mind and his body, but that he may become in time an efficient officer of the Church, to render on Sundays and festivals to his God a seemingly and duteous offering of praise on the church bells? But it may be asked, Of what shall the Sunday ringing consist? I would say clearly, The very best of which circumstances will permit. It matters not whether the ringing shall consist of a 5040 or a 120, or even rounds. Whatever the band of ringers can manage perfectly, let that be the thing chosen for Sunday’s ringing. I would have no experiments made, no young hands in, no practising, no rehearsing on a Sunday; and I think by adopting this plan the young ringers would be all the more anxious to be regular in their attendances, and painstaking in learning the various methods taught them; for they would then feel it a great honour when the time comes for their being allowed to take part in the Sunday peal. And this would be especially true when once the town or parish were cognisant of the strict Sunday rule.

Probably in churches where there are frequent services on the Sunday it would be found that there is not time sufficient for a 5040. In that case a quarter-peal, or some shorter touch, could be accomplished. I will conclude these few remarks by saying that I believe all difficulties about Sunday ringing will entirely vanish when once we grasp what church bells are, and in whose service they are placed in the towers of our churches.

G. M. CUSTANCE.

Published: 28.i.1887

New chiming gear has been fixed in St. Martin’s Church, Cwmyoy, by Mr. Hooper of Woodbury, near Exeter.

Published: 30.ix.1887

Bell-ringing Societies.

SIR,—It seems odd that both your correspondents, Mr. Davies and Mr. Seddon, should have misunderstood my letter on this subject in many of the points I touched upon. I intended certainly to make change-ringing subservient to the use of the bells on great festivals, &c. What I intimated was this, that, first and foremost, ringing of some sort must be insured on these days. I distinctly said, ‘Change-ringing, by all means if you can get it, but if not, you must put up with “stoney.”’ This I said referring to places where change-ringing is unknown, or where a full company of change-ringers cannot be obtained. As regards payment, as I said before, this is necessary to secure regularity in most places. It is very rarely that you find a whole company anywhere (whether change-ringers or round-ringers) who are all model Churchmen, and would be willing to give their services free on great festivals, although generally you may find several out of a company who would do so. Therefore it is far better to make the thing safe by securing a regular payment. I myself have been a paid ‘scruffe’ ringer, in one place or another, ever since I learnt to ring at all. But if no payment were to be had I would gladly give my services free to ring on Easter Day, Ascension Day, or Whit Sunday, or any other occasion when bells ought to be rung. Which, in fact, I have done many a time. But you would not catch me ringing for a wedding or a choral festival or any local affair without payment, unless it was to meet a good company of change-ringers and ring something worthy of note.

I am not quite such an enthusiast about change-ringing as Mr. Seddon seems to imagine. In the company to which I belong we have one or two change-ringers, but we should never think of trying to introduce the art into our belfry with the company in its present state and eight heavy bells which sadly want relanging. At the same time, those of us who are change-ringers are always glad to go for a peal or a touch anywhere else out of town when we can get a chance to make up a good company.

I quite believe Mr. Davies when he says he has failed to come across any considerable number of clerical ‘dabblers,’ for the simple reason that I often see his name in peals and touches with some of the best ringers in England, and several of those who rung in the clerical peal at Drayton before alluded to. Nevertheless these men do exist, as I said before.

J. R. JERRAM.

Salisbury.

Published: 11.vi.1886

Bell-ringing Societies.

SIR,—I am sorry if I have misconstrued anything that Mr. Jerram said in his first letter. I certainly did understand, and his last letter rather strengthens the impression than otherwise, that he set little value upon what I regard as a matter of the greatest importance, viz., the ringing for service on Sundays, not only on High Festivals, but every Sunday throughout the year. So long as this is considered by the ringers a matter of secondary importance they will never be looked upon as a Church body. My chief object has always been to bring about a closer connexion between the ringers of church bells and the Church. The only way in which I see that the character and *status*, so to speak, of ringers can be raised in the long run, so that they shall be an institution which the Church can be proud of, instead of reflecting discredit on her, is for them to recognise their position as members of a Church Society to be recognised as such.

With regard to Mr. Davies’ objection to making hand-bells a source of profit, I certainly did not mean to countenance the practice of going round from house to house on Christmas Eve, *except* under due restrictions and under proper supervision; in which case I do not think that any of the evils he anticipates need arise. But what I had in view was rather the taking part in entertainments in the parish, or in other parishes; at the same time I recommended that the profits should be devoted to the good of the Society, and not made a source of *private* gain: as to their proving a counter-attraction, there is no doubt he is right. That is the danger, but can be guarded against, I think, by proper regulations.

H. SEDDON.

49 Florin Street.

Published: 2.vii.1886

THE Rev. Jas. Jeakes, Rector of Hornsey, writes:—‘Can any of your correspondents send me some good workable rules for a Bell-ringers’ Guild?’

Published: 25.ii.1887

THE church bells of Saltash have, much to the credit of the new town council, been renovated. The work was carried out by Mr. Aggett of Chagford.

Published: 13.v.1887

THE church bells of the parish of Kingsland, Herefordshire, have been restored, and the service for their re-dedication is fixed for the 18th inst., when the Bishop of the diocese will be present.

Published: 13.v.1887

THE new bell, subscribed for by the parishioners of Silsoe in commemoration of Her Majesty’s Jubilee, has been hung in the church tower. The bell, which has cost 43l. 10s., and weighs 6 cwt. 3 qrs. 10 lbs., has this inscription on it:—‘*Pro Jubilæo Victoria R.I., Laus Deo.*’

Published: 29.vii.1887

It is proposed that two new bells shall be added to the three bells now in the belfry of Blaby Church, Leicestershire.

Published: 16.ix.1887

THE *Bedfordshire Mercury* says that the long-looked-for treble bell for the parish church of Sharnbrook has come at last. It proves to be of nice tone, and was cast by Warner & Sons, London.

Published: 16.ix.1887

THE *Wrexham Advertiser* says that efforts are being made to raise the sum of 200l. to hang the beautiful ring of bells in St. Peter’s Tower, Ruthin, and to purchase two new bells.

Published: 16.ix.1887

THE Prince of Wales has ordered, through Mr. A. Blomfield, a set of eight of Messrs. J. Harrington & Co.’s patent tubular bells, to be placed in the church of St. Albans, Copenhagen.

Published: 4.xi.1887

On the 26th ult. the tower of the church at Tarvin was much damaged by fire. But for the arrival of the ringers it would probably have been destroyed.

Published: 4.xi.1887

A RING of bells is about to be placed in St. Philip's Church, Alderley Edge. Messrs. Hannington of Coventry are the makers.

Published: 9.xii.1887

St. Mary's Church, Liscard, Cheshire, has lately been provided with a new ring of bells. They are to be dedicated at a special service on New-Year's Eve.

Published: 23.xii.1887

On Easter Day a ring of nine new bells was dedicated at Fenton Parish Church, Staffordshire, the Office being said by the Vicar, the Rev. H. C. Turner. The bells, which are the gift of Mrs. Hitchman, of Fenton House, have been provided by Harrington & Co., Coventry.

Published: 6.v.1888

INSCRIPTIONS ON CHURCH BELLS.

To everything that moves and has the gift of speech, no matter how inarticulate it may be, there has ever been attached by mankind the dignity of a personality and a name. Church bells, especially, enjoy this privilege in all its completeness, and have been credited with the power, not only of speaking very meaningfully to those on this earth that have ears to hear, but also of addressing prayers of great efficacy to the kindly beings above and of uttering effective warnings to wicked spirits below. To obviate the possibility of a bell fulfilling any other than its destined functions, the words, which it was to be its life's work to utter, were inscribed indelibly on its metallic person, oftentimes, with great appropriateness, on the sounding-bow itself. Over the words the form of a cross was generally incised, and, underneath, the name of the founder, and sometimes the donor. These particulars were in early times nearly always in Latin, and it was not until after the Reformation that the bells were allowed the use of intelligible Saxon. The comparative scarcity of old bells in England can be accounted for, to a certain extent, by their wholesale destruction during the Commonwealth in order to supply the metal currency. We read in the diary of a contemporary statesman that 'the faire bell, called Jesus Bell, at Lichfield, was knocked in pieces by a Presbiterian pewterer;' and many ancient church records contain similar laments.

The most popular name for bells in early times seems to have been Sancta Maria, or Mary; in old churches there are, on an average, more than four times as many bells named after the

Virgin Mother as after any other saint. St. Catherine, too, enjoyed great favour among founders. Of the male saints, St. John, St. Peter, St. Michael, and St. Augustine, took precedence. It was formerly supposed that the new bells were, in the middle ages, regularly baptized by the priest; but the ancient ceremony of washing the bells inside and out with holy water, which gave rise to the theory, seems to have been a form merely of consecration. Modern bells are still often named after the chief saints, but occasionally recourse is had to other sources; thus, Miss Edna Lyall has given for names to three bells, recently presented by her to one of the Eastbourne churches, the titles of the most popular of her well-known works.

It is frequently very difficult to decipher the ancient Latin inscriptions on bells. The words are run on without any proper divisions; the letters are, from the ignorance of the craftsman, very ill-formed, and sometimes even upside down. Invocations to the saints are extremely common. We find '*Clemens atque pia misere succurre Maria!*' '*Sancta Francisce, ora pro nobis!*' and, as a curious instance of false analogy, '*Sancta Trinitas, ora pro nobis!*' Sometimes, the invocation is replaced by a moral reflection, such as '*Si charitatem non habeo, sum tanquam aes sonans!*' or, '*Vox sum clamantis, preparate vram Domini!*' One bell recites, in Latin hexameters, its numerous functions: 'I praise the true God. I summon the people, gather the clergy. I weep for the dead, give joy to festivals. Plagues I chase away. My voice is the terror of all evil spirits.'

Bells and Bell-ringing.

SIR,—I wish the account of 'Bells and Bell-ringing' could be made prospective, so that we might go and hear them. For instance, I see that on Monday, 16th April, there was a meeting at Crayford; and there are, no doubt, many meetings where change-ringing takes place which some of us would like to hear if we knew of them beforehand. AMELIA C. GILMAN.
Sutton House, Hoveley, Dartford.

Published 29.vi.1888

A TUBULAR ring of eight bells has just been placed in the tower of Wrea Green Church. The dedication service is fixed for the 20th of September, when the harvest festival takes place, Bishop Cramer-Roberts promising to preach the sermon on the occasion.

Published: 31.viii.1888

THE sum of 195*l.* has been collected towards recasting and increasing the number of the bells at Blaby Parish Church, Leicestershire.

Published: 11.xi.1887

It has been decided that an attempt shall be made to raise 350*l.* for the purpose of rehanging the bells of the parish church at Grantham.

Published: 16.xii.1887

WE understand there is every probability of the chimes being once again heard from the tower of the Leeds parish church before the end of the year, a friend of the church having undertaken the entire cost. It is about twenty years since they were last heard. The old works being worn out, entirely new works will be substituted.

Published 1.vi.1888

CAMBRIDGE quarter chimes have just been erected at Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, and connected to the church bells. John Smith & Sons, Midland Clock Works, Derby, who made the clock some time since, have now carried out this work.

Published 15.vi.1888

After the Reformation, there seems to have been greater latitude allowed in the choice of inscriptions. In loyal times, 'God save the King and Church!' was a favourite sentence. A kindred sentiment is expressed in 'Feare God and honner the King, for obedience is a vertuous thing!' Some bells give short sentences of advice and warning, as 'Give thanks to God! O man, be meeke and lyeve in rest!' On the tenor at Wolverhampton Church is written—

'All ye that hear my mournful sound,
Repent before you lie in the ground!
And seek the Lord while yet ye breathe.
There's no repentance after death.'

A bell, used for striking the hours, contains on it the excellent reminder, 'The moments slip by unheeded, but are noted in the account against us!' A very appropriate couplet for a summoning bell is, 'I will sound and resound to Thee, O Lord, To call thy people to hear Thy Word!' Another is, 'I sweetly tolling, men do call, To taste on meat that feeds the soule!' A fire-bell, cast in 1652, bears on it the words: 'Lord, quench this furious flame; Arise! run! help! put out the same!' The trebles, from their diminutive size, have been supposed, apparently, to have had less exalted ideas. The one at Cookham pertly remarks, 'I mean to make it understood, that though I'm little yet I'm good;' while, in another church, No. 1 asserts to his companions, 'I am the first; altho' but small, I will be heard above you all!' The date of casting and the name of the founder were added in very various manners. Sometimes we have merely a bald statement, such as, 'Wilms founder me fecit;' or 'Anno Dom. MDCLXII, Tobie Norris cast me.' But occasionally the heights of lofty verse were reached, as in—

'If you would know when we were run,
It was 22 March, 1701.'

The great bell in Glasgow Cathedral delivers this imposing sermon:—'In the year of grace, 1583, Marcus Knox, a merchant in Glasgow, zealous for the interest of the Reformed religion, caused me to be fabricated in Holland, for the use of his fellow-citizens, and placed me with solemnity in the tower of their cathedral. My function was announced by the impress on my bosom—"*Me audito, venias, doctrinam sanctam ut discas!*"—and I was taught to number the hours of unheeded time. One hundred and ninety-five years had I sounded these awful warnings when I was broken by the hands of inconsiderate and unskilful men. In the year 1790 I was cast into the furnace, refounded at London, and returned to my sacred vocation. Reader! thou also shalt know a resurrection; may it be to eternal life!'

Published: 6.vii.1888

If Amelia C. Gilman will examine our last issue (the very one in which her complaint appeared), she will find no fewer than five consecutive notices of forthcoming meetings; and if she will examine our issue of March 29, she will find due notice of the meeting at Crayford on April 16. She should have been more careful of her facts before writing.—Ed. C. B.

Published: 6.vii.1888

THREE new bells from the foundry of Messrs. John Taylor & Co., of Loughborough, have been given to Crathorne Parish Church by Mr. J. Lionel Dugdale.

Published: 21.xii.1888

THE work of improvement in the belfry of the ancient Parish Church of Wilmslow, Manchester, has just been completed at a cost of about 200*l*. It is expected that further improvements will be carried out in other parts of the edifice.

Published: 4.i.1889

ANTONY CHURCH bells have been rebung with all the latest improvements by Messrs. Hawker & Co., St. John's, Devonport.

Published: 8.iii.1889

A SET of eight tubular bells, which have been put in the tower of the old White Chapel, Cleckheaton, in memory of the late Rev. R. P. Taylor, who was for fifty years vicar, was formally opened on Saturday afternoon last. The bells have been made by Messrs. J. Harrington & Co., Coventry.

Published 26.iv.1889

AN idea of resuming the ringing of the bells of Peterborough Cathedral, which have been rehung at considerable expense, has been abandoned, as Mr. Pearson, the cathedral architect, has expressed his opinion that it would not be prudent to run the risk with the great west front in its present weak state.

Published: 17.v.1889

Two new bells have been hung in the Church of St. Andrew, Penrith, a thorough restoration of which building has been going on for the last two years.

Published: 14.vi.1889

St. Michael's Church and Bells, Coventry.

SIR,—Will you kindly give me space to say a few words respecting the paragraph which appeared recently in *Church Bells* anent this question? Nine of the ten bells which constitute the celebrated and musical peal of St. Michael's, Coventry, are now lying, as they have done ever since the restoration of the steeple was commenced some four years ago, on the floor at the west end of the church. The treble bell, which has now to do duty for the whole ten, and around the rim of which is cast the suggestive couplet—

'Although I am both light and small,
I will be heard above you all'—

is hung in a small wooden campanile on the north side of the spacious building, and is simply tanged for the services of the church.

The magnificent and unique steeple fast approaches completion, and it has been decided by a unanimous vote of the Restoration Committee that the tower shall be thoroughly and completely restored both in its interior as well as its exterior, the whole of the very tall lantern being left open, and the rich stone groining rebuilt ninety-six feet in height, which was hacked away, about a century ago, when the present peal of bells were cast and hung in a lower stage of the tower. The consequence of this important decision of the Committee is, that if the bells are again hung in the ancient steeple, they must be hung higher up, at about the same level as where the first bells were hung soon after the tower was built in the fourteenth century—about 120 feet up in the tower, where a bell chamber was provided by the architect in the original design. A suggestion has been made by the late clerk of the works, Mr. Webster, that, by strengthening the tower with iron or copper plates, it might be made strong enough for the bells to be rung in the octagon, which is between the tower and spire, and about half the height of the whole steeple. But when the small space of ground on which this beautiful steeple stands is taken into consideration, with the fact of the exceeding thinness of the walls and the structure being considerably out of the perpendicular, there are grave doubts in the minds of many whether the vibration and thrust from the movement of so heavy a peal of bells rung at so great a height would not do very serious mischief to the fabric, if it did not actually cause the steeple to topple over altogether. It is thought, if placed anywhere above the groining, the bells could only be chimed. Under these circumstances it is suggested that a new and separate tower should be built, and a campanile erected specially designed so that the bells could be rung in full peal in safety, and without any anxiety about them.

It has been proposed to build this new tower at the west end, but there are those who say it would be objectionable to do this; 'that it would so completely change the effect of the whole building as to destroy old associations, and would altogether alter the beautiful effect and artistic appearances of the three tall spires for which the city is so famous.' Others object to a twin tower at the west end because they consider it would detract from the beauty of the ancient steeple. It would certainly hide the view of the present tower from the north side, where it is seen to the most advantage, and with the greatest effect.

But twin western steeples in Coventry, and in the old diocese of Lichfield, of which for so many centuries it formed so important a part, would be no new feature, for to this day the grand old cathedral of St. Chad, from which it has been said that Coventry Cathedral was copied, still raises its magnificent and noble spires, while at Coventry itself for five hundred years, until destroyed at the Reformation by the eighth Henry, the cathedral church of St. Mary, triple-spired, and crowned with western towers and spires, stood only a few yards away and in the same cemetery as the present church of St. Michael, which is the subject of this notice. No doubt there are reasons and objections which may and will be urged against the erection (to what scheme may there not be) of another tower at the west end, but

THE three bells which were generously presented to St. Peter's Church, Leek, North Lancashire, when rebuilt in 1879, by Mr. R. Wearing, of Stipping Hall, Mrs. Wearing and Miss Parke have just had two more added to their number; the gifts respectively of Mr. R. R. P. Wearing on his coming of age, and of his younger brother, Mr. W. T. Wearing. The bells, which are very sweet in tone, are from the foundry of Messrs. Taylor & Sons, Loughborough, and have cost upwards of 400*l*.

Published: 8.ii.1889

A NEW peal of bells has been hung in the tower of Holy Trinity Church, Burnley. They are eight in number, and weigh altogether 57 cwt. 1 qr. 17 lbs. They have been supplied by Messrs. Gillott & Co., Croydon. The Bishop of Sodor and Man preached at the dedication service.

Published: 29.iii.1889

THE handsome tower of Crossena Church has been furnished with a clock and a peal of six bells. The inaugural service, on Saturday 11th, was attended by the Venerable Archdeacon Clarke, Rev. Dr. Porter, and Rev. W. T. Bulpit, the Vicar of Crossena. Master Leonard Williamson started the clock, which was made by Messrs. Smith, of Derby, and the evening concluded with festivities. The bells were cast by Messrs. Mears & Stainbank, and are worked by eight honorary ringers.

Published: 24.v.1889

THE bells of St. Michael's Church, Coventry, are standing in a row at the west end, waiting to be hung. The architects of the church, however, are not agreed where they ought to be suspended, and the committee is divided on the point. The glorious spire is incomplete without its bells. To build a twin tower at the north-west corner, the exact counterpart of the tower below the spire, would so completely change the effect of the whole building as to destroy old associations, while to hang the bells in the present octagon might topple down the spire.

Published: 20.ix.1889

there would certainly be some very great advantages to be derived from a plan of this kind; it would greatly improve the general appearance of the somewhat bald look of the church at the west end, from the steeple being built so much to the south side. A good and noble west front and State entrance might also be formed, which would add much dignity to the whole fabric.

But if this site was rejected, in the event of it being decided to erect another tower, there is another spot which could be used for the purpose on the north side, where probably, if placed in a well-designed and specially constructed building, the bells, from the fact of it being placed in the centre of the churchyard, would sound better and more effective than anywhere else. I allude to a suggestion made by myself two years ago that this proposed campanile, if built, should be erected on the north side of the church across the avenue, and in a line with the altar window of the Girdless Chapel, connected to the fabric by an arch. No legal difficulty would arise as to the ringing of the bells, as there would be, perhaps, if built in an isolated position. A campanile built on this spot, similar, but with a few alterations, to the one designed by Mr. Oldrid Scott, and exhibited at the Royal Academy a short time since, could not fail to produce a building, even in an architectural sense, not unworthy of the great steeple of St. Michael's, and if built at an altitude of a hundred feet, would, being thirty-six feet lower than the present tower, and only one-third the height of the whole steeple, and on lower ground, be quite subordinate to the ancient structure.

It is computed that to build a bell tower architecturally in harmony, and good enough to favourably compare with the newly-restored ancient steeple, a sum of from seven to eight thousand pounds will be required, but fortunately, from the great liberality of one subscriber alone, half this sum is already promised.

It is quite clear that nearly all ancient towers (unless quite by accident), especially those in the Perpendicular style, cannot, from the large proportion of the voids to the solids, in consequence of the large windows, frequently in the lower stages, be good for the effective ringing of heavy bells. An artist friend was showing the writer, not long since, designs of nearly all the campaniles in Europe, and we were struck, not only with their very thick walls and strutting, extended buttresses, but the absence of all windows and openings until the level of the bell chamber was reached, and even then close and compact loofers were placed in the openings.

The Committee having consulted the highest authorities, those eminent architects, Messrs. Christian, Peirson, Oldred Scott, and Brooks, also Messrs. Taylor, the celebrated bell-founders of Loughborough, who have all declared that without great addition to the strength of the tower by the blocking up of the very large and fine windows in the lower stage, and the building of massive and tall external buttresses, the bells could not with any degree of safety be rung again. They, the Committee, are now desirous that the present contracts may be completed and the steeple fully restored before they discuss or enter into any new scheme at present for the rehanging of the bells.

There can be little doubt, if the citizens desire, which it is believed they do, that these sweet-sounding old bells, which are the only perfect peal now in the city, should once more be rung in full peal, that with the very liberal offer of half the cost of a new tower from one citizen, the remainder, when the proper time comes, will be found.

My only apology for trespassing so much on your valuable space, is the wide-spread interest that I know is felt—not only in Coventry, but throughout England—in the complete restoration of the tall and graceful steeple of St. Michael, Coventry, which is certainly not one of the least of this nation's monuments in stone, and of the rehanging of its musical bells,

A. J. B.

Published: 11.x.1889

St. Michael's Church, Coventry, Tower and Spire.

Sir,—As one of the committee of five architects not named by your correspondent 'A. J. B.,' whose report on the state of the tower was recently published, I may, perhaps, be permitted to make a few comments on the subject of his letter. Our inquiry was necessarily limited as strictly as possible to the safety or otherwise of the 'restored' tower to receive the existing bells for ringing in peal. We had nothing to do with any contingent schemes or propositions.

The idea of the late Clerk of Works to strengthen the walls by means of plates of copper, or of iron bedded in cement, can hardly be called a suggestion for serious consideration. Supposing the walls as now constructed to be rendered sufficiently rigid by such an application, this very rigidity would tend to their disintegration, through the vibration of ringing, and through the expansion and contraction of the metal, apart from any question of oxidation. The erection of a small Eiffel tower within, to carry the bells, would have been quite as reasonable and sensible.

The octagonal stage apparently was designed for the belfry; but it could not have been intended to receive such a peal of heavy bells, nor for any bells to be hung so as to be rung in peal. There was no provision for ropes or for ringers beneath; and the bells would probably be chimed with the foot and a short lever, which conservative practice, I am told, is still followed in some Continental places, and which involves no danger or damage to the structure.

The groined ceiling, ninety-six feet from the ground, said to 'have been chopped away,' would appear never to have been completed, or to have been filled in with its rich tracery just commenced. Its completion may have been deferred on account of the subsidence of the tower, which must have commenced almost prior to its completion.

As to 'twin towers,' I fear that a second tower at the west end would prove but an abortive twin. It could not possibly be placed with any sort of uniformity to the nave; unless, indeed, the present towers could be removed considerably further south.

A much grander and probably more popular scheme would be to re-erect the south-western tower of the now almost extinct cathedral, which would thus reassert its claim to 'diocesan' restoration. It would group, and not clash, with the present tower of St. Michael's. This need not stand in the way of the Church of St. Michael's being adopted for the cathedral, and attached to the cathedral site as soon as it may have acquired its rights. Here would be good scope, close at hand, for building a worthy receptacle for the valuable legacy handed down to the bell-ringers of St. Michael's. Or the rights of this tower and its site might be conveyed to St. Michael's, which would then, and in either case, be relieved of its present difficulties. Its ancient prestige would then be not merely preserved, but enhanced.

30a Wimpole Street, W., October 14, 1889. WILLIAM WHITE, F.S.A.

Published: 18.x.1889

DR. PARR'S LOVE OF CHURCH BELLS.—Dr. Parr's hobby was church bells. Not only did he study their history from the period of their first introduction into the Christian Church about the sixth century, but he investigated the various uses, rational or superstitious, to which they have been applied. He could also tell the number, weight, names, and qualities of almost all the principal bells in England, and even in Europe. Of his own fondness for bells, he speaks in the following extract from a letter to Mr. Roscoe, dated Hatton, July 20, 1807 :—'It so happens that from my youth upwards, even to this hour, I have been a distinguished adept in the noble art of ringing; that I have equal delight with Milton in the sound of bells; that I have far superior knowledge in the science of casting them; and that my zeal for accomplishing my favourite object is very great.'

Published: 9.v.1890

The Church of St. Mary, Hailsham, Sussex, is now undergoing restoration. Amongst other improvements, the lofty belfry arch has been opened out, the roof raised to its original pitch, and a clerestory added. The bells will be re-hung in a new oak frame, and the peal increased from five to eight. The work has been placed in the hands of Messrs. Mears & Stainbank, of London. Four of the present bells were cast by John Hodson, 1663. The tenor weighs about 12 cwt., in G sharp. Hailsham is one of the few places where the Curfew is still rung (on the tenor) each evening at eight o'clock.

Published: 1.xi.1889

The bells of St. Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, were recently dedicated. The ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Melbourne in the presence of a large assemblage. After the Dedication service, the Governor and Miss Loch, accompanied by Bishop Goe and the Chapter of the Cathedral, ascended the belfry. Sir Henry Loch struck the first note of the peal.

Published: 17.i.1890

MESSRS. LEWELLINS & JAMES, of Bristol, have rehung the bells of St. James, Bristol, and the tenor bells of Blackwell and Wraxall Churches, Somersetshire. They are at present engaged at Ermington Church, near Plymouth, adding a new bell and thoroughly rehangng the whole peal with a new frame complete.

Published: 4.iv.1890

At a recent parish meeting at Ellacombe, Torquay, it was unanimously resolved 'That it is desirable to erect a peal of patent tubular bells at Ellacombe Church, not only on account of their manifest utility, but as a thank-offering to Almighty God for the success of the spiritual work of the parish under the present Vicar.' A representative committee was appointed to carry the resolution into effect.

Published: 2.v.1890

The Bishop of Winchester consecrated the seventh bell of Farnham parish church on Wednesday, last week, which has just returned from the foundry of Messrs. Mears & Stainbank, the representatives of the original firm by whom it was cast. From the inscription it appears that the original bell dates back to the year 1723, when the Rev. James Fond was vicar.

Published: 13.vi.1890

CHURCH BELLS AND RINGERS.

A Paper read at the Merston Rural-deanial Conference, diocese of Bath and Wells, March 21st, 1890, by the Rev. H. J. POOLE, rector of Stowell.

[We are most happy to publish this excellent and sensible paper without, however, pledging ourselves to agreement with every single sentence.]

The bell, as a musical instrument, may (like the organ) be considered to be one of the artistic products of Christianity, for the so-called bells of the Greeks and Romans bear no closer resemblance to the bell as we have it than a Turkish fiddle does to the Stradivarius violin.

In early Christian times we find the following Latin names for bells of various kinds:—‘Tintinnabulum’ and ‘nola’ (small handbells, used in monastic refectories); ‘squilla,’ a handbell rung in the choir at certain parts of the service as a guide to the congregation; ‘dupla,’ the hour, or clock-bell, at first struck by hand, as on board ship; ‘signum’ (whence ‘tocsin’) a large bell placed in the tower, and used to summon the monks to the seven canonical hours of prayer; and ‘campana,’ a bell placed in the steeple to call laymen to Divine service, and to give notice of a soul passing into eternity. It is ‘campana’ which answers most nearly to our church bell. Leaving aside the question of its etymological derivation (whether from Paullinus, of Nola, in Campania, *circa* A.D. 400, or, as is much more likely, from the Campanian brass, which is said to have been a metal most suitable for bells), it is important to bear in mind that bells were at first used in convents, and afterwards adopted in parish churches. The use of bells in convents is certainly as old as the sixth century. In still earlier times a crier, armed with a horn, a clapper, or a small handbell, sufficed to assemble Christians for public worship. A curious trace of this custom is said to have been found within the present generation. In a certain Welsh village the sexton used to go forth with a handbell, and summon parishioners to church by name.

How the early church bells were made and hung we have no means of knowing, nor do we get any definite information until the time of Charlemagne. The latter ‘encouraged the art of bell-founding, and entertained bell-founders at his court. One of the most famous was Tancho, a monk of St. Gall, who cast a fine bell for the church at Aachen.’ The material he used for an alloy was silver. Silver, it may be said, in spite of all the fine things which poets say in praise of ‘silver bells,’ is one of the worst metals for bell-founding, being in fact not much better than lead. If the chronicler Ingulphus is to be believed, the first monastic building in England which possessed anything like a peal of bells was Croyland, the Abbot of which had a large bell made about 900 A.D., to which he added six others, producing thereby ‘the most exquisite harmony.’ However, we have reliable testimony that in the year 1456 Pope Calixtus sent a ring of five bells to King’s College, Cambridge, where they remained 300 years. The tenor of this peal weighed 57 cwt. By the beginning of the sixteenth century peals of eight bells were hung in a few of the principal churches of this country, but anything like change-ringing is of much later date.

This closes the historical period of my paper. Before taking leave of it I will just refer to two curious customs in connexion with church bells which prevailed during these ages. (1) The baptism of bells. This arose, no doubt, from a simple service for benediction. The latter is fully described in the Sacramentary of St. Gregory. The custom of baptizing bells must have arisen before 759 A.D., since it is then forbidden in Charlemagne’s Capitulary (‘ut cloccæ non baptizentur’). But the superstitious practice was too strong to be eradicated, and in 970 A.D. we find Pope John XIII. baptizing the great bell of the Lateran Church, and naming it after himself. It is said that even in recent times the Bishop of Chalons baptized a peal, and delivered an eloquent address on the special virtues of each of the ‘holy and happy family.’ (2) In close connexion with this custom was the belief in the power of bells to quell a storm and drive away evil spirits. This superstition is said to be traceable to St. Salaberge, who lived in the seventh century. The story goes that a small bell was brought from heaven to the saint to relieve the fears of her daughter. The following lines convey the legend:—

‘Reliquiæ Sanctæ Salaberge et campana præsens
Expellunt felices et ipsa tonitrua pellit.’

This superstition is often found endorsed on church bells, *e.g.*:—

‘Funera plango, fulgura frango, Sabbata pango,
Excito lentos, dissipio ventos, paco crentuos.’

In the Golden Legend of Wynkin de Worde we find the following:—‘The evil spirits that be in the region of the air doubt much when they hear the bells rung; and this is the cause why the bells are rung when it thunders, or when great tempests or outrages of weather happen: to the end that the fiends and evil spirits should be abashed and flee, and cease of the moving of the tempests.’ This superstition connected itself with the ‘passing’ bell, which was supposed to drive away evil spirits from the dying man’s bedside.

The beneficent action of bells after consecration was not always very clear, as the following incident will serve to show. In a certain monastery in Italy a bell was baptized by the name of Proculus, and dedicated to the saint so named. It also happened that the sexton’s name was Proculus. This double coincidence appears to have exercised the mind of the sexton to such an extent that he neglected to see that the bell was safely hung. At any rate, no sooner was the bell consecrated than it signalled the virtues infused into it by baptism by falling upon the head of its ill-fated namesake, and committing murder and suicide in one. This brilliant feat was recorded in the following couplet:—

‘Si procul a Proculo Proculi campana fuisset,
Jam procul a Proculo Proculus ipse fuisset.’

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Jam procul a Proculo Proculus ipse fuisset.’

several days to allow for cooling down, the cope is removed and the bell lifted up and carefully tested by tapping at various points.

If the pitch of the bell be found too sharp, it may be lowered by being thinned at the sound-bow by a revolving cutter. If too flat, it is treated in a similar way at the edge or ‘brim.’ But tuning cannot be carried very far without injury to the tone of the bell; the object, therefore, of the founder is to cast his bell perfect. A whole peal thus cast is termed a ‘maiden peal;’ and for the credit of turning out a maiden peal many a founder has allowed bells to pass out of his workshop which, to any one who has an ear to hear, are execrably out of tune.

The form of the bell, like that of the violin, is purely empirical. (Alas! how little ‘theory’ can do for us!) Its present shape is precisely what it was in the hands of the mediæval founder, and no one would venture to deviate by a hairsbreadth from the curve, which indeed is no other than Hogarth’s ‘line of beauty.’ The old way of hanging a bell is by running iron braces round the ‘canons’ and through the ‘stock.’ Lord Grimthorpe’s plan, adopted by Taylor of Loughborough, is to pass the clapper bolt through the centre of the crown, and run it into the ‘stock,’ another bolt passing through the crown at a little distance from the centre, and also running into the stock. The advantage of this arrangement is that, should the ‘sound-bow’ be worn from the action of the clapper, by removing the eccentric bolt, and turning the bell round a few degrees, a new striking surface is easily obtainable—a process which can be repeated several times. A bell fastened by the ‘canons’ can be quartered only once.

A well-cast bell, like a fine violin, pleases both eye and ear, though it is difficult to view it to advantage in the confined space of a bell-turret. It is difficult to analyse the tones of bells, since they are compounded of harmonies varying in number, kind, and relative intensity. The octave, fifth, and major third, should be heard most prominently; the minor ninth, less so. Hemony, of Zutphen, who lived in the seventeenth century, required a good bell to have three octaves—two fifths, one major, and one minor third.

I will now say a few words on the various uses of church bells. The practice of tolling a bell before service is enjoined in the rubric ordering daily service: ‘And the curate shall say the same’ (*i.e.*, morning and evening prayer) ‘in the parish church . . . and shall cause a bell to be tolled thereunto a convenient time before he begin.’ And in the fifteenth canon, enjoining the use of the Litany on Wednesdays and Fridays: ‘The minister, at the accustomed hour of service, shall resort to the church or chapel, and warning being given to the people by tolling of a bell, shall say the Litany.’ The practice of ‘tolling’ before service (which seems to be a remnant of the old *Ave* bell) is not intended, I presume, to exclude ‘chiming’ or ‘ringing’ on Sundays before service. Sunday ‘ringing’ before service is a special feature in some parishes, and nothing marks the day as a Christian festival so much as a joyful peal from the church tower. Chiming is a very poor substitute. I venture to plead for the extension of Sunday ‘ringing’ wherever ringers can be got together (and what other day in the week is so favourable for them?). The last five minutes before service can, of course, be reserved for ‘tolling,’ as usual. No doubt it is impracticable to restore the canonical use of the ‘passing’ bell, which, however beautiful in its significance, might lead to difficulties, and give pain and annoyance in some quarters; but the latter part of the sixty-seventh canon (which is often overlooked) might at least be observed. This part of the canon runs, ‘And after the party’s death, if it so fall out, there shall be rung no more than one short peal, and one other before the burial, and one other after the burial.’ Even if the ‘passing’ bell, as now tolled after death, take the place of the first peal ordered in the canon, yet the two short peals—one before and the other after the burial—might be carried out with great advantage. The bells would thus say what the burial service itself says: ‘We give Thee hearty thank for that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our Brother out of the miseries of this sinful world.’

Muffled peals may be rung after the manner recommended by Mr. Troyte, viz., by muffling one side of the clapper only (the ‘back stroke’), and ringing in ‘whole pulls.’ In this way the full sonorous tones of the bell first strike the ear, succeeded immediately by the same sounds veiled or muffled—a plaintive echo.

The time allowed for wedding peals should be strictly limited. Three hours at the outside are quite long enough, and there is no earthly reason why ringers, whose duties lie mostly in the humbler ranks of life, should lose a whole day’s work, and at the end perhaps be no better for it. As to the secular uses of church bells, all matters of national rejoicing or mourning are fit occasions for their use. In this they can truly proclaim, as inscribed on a church bell at Plymouth,—

‘Gaudeo cum gaudentibus,
Doleo cum dolentibus.’

But never, never, should their iron tongues be used to excite political or party passions.

I must now say a few words concerning inscriptions on bells. Making my remarks with church bells in this deanery. The oldest bells carry

only a cross, or some other sacred symbol, with a text from Scripture or the Biuary, *e.g.*:—

‘Sit nomen Domini benedictum.’ (Rimpton, 3rd.)
‘Domine dirige nos.’ (Sutton Bingham.)
‘Vox Augustini sonat in aure Dei.’ (Barwick, treble.)

The borders of the text are often beautifully embellished, but no founder’s or donor’s names appear: the bell had simply its sacred message to convey. At a later date invocations to saints occur, *e.g.*:—

‘Ave Micael, ora pro nobis.’ (Queen Camel, 2nd.)
‘Sancte Katerina, ora pro nobis.’ (Barwick, 2nd; Tent, treble.)

The following bells in this deanery bear the usual invocation to the B.V.M.:—

‘Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.’

(Templecombe, tenor; Horsington, 2nd; Sandford Orcas, tenor; Trent, 4th.) Poyntington, 2nd, has simply ‘MARIA.’ Horsington, tenor, has—

‘Ave gracie plena, Dominus tecum.’

At a still later date the inscriptions become didactic, *e.g.*:—

‘Give thanks to God.’ (Chilton Cantelo, 3rd.)
‘All that hath breath praise the Lord.’ (Mudford, 2nd.)
‘Draw near to God.’ (Queen Camel, 4th; Trent, 3rd.)
‘Praise Him upon the loud cymbals.’ (Closworth, 3rd.)

At the next stage we find mottoes which ascribe a certain personality to the bell, at first as a preacher or moralist, *e.g.*:—

‘I to the church the living call,
And to the grave do summons all.’
(Milborne Port, tenor; Preston, tenor.)
‘I sound to bid the sick repent,
In hope of life with Him to spend.’
(Mudford, tenor; Charlton Horethorn, tenor.)

continued below

By a natural transition such inscriptions often become self-laudatory, e.g.:—

‘Full of music are we if well rung.’ (E. Coker, 3rd.)
‘My treble voice makes hearts rejoice.’ (Queen Camel, treble.)
‘Although I am the least of all.’ (Yeovil, 3rd, originally treble.)
‘I’ll be heard above you all.’ (Yeovil, 3rd, originally treble.)

This self-laudation often passes into doggerel bombast, e.g.:—

‘Take and weigh me right,
For I am near five thousand weight.
Sing praise to God.
Stephen Hooper and his wife Joane,
Was the doner alone.
Come let us sound out,
He keep my place no doubt.
You wrath and wright,
Pray speak the right,
Come see how I am run.
‘Twas young Bilbie that cast Me.
Such work you never done.’
(Yeovil, tenor; weight, 2 tons 4 cwt.)

In explanation of the unintelligible line, ‘You wrath and wright,’ it may be noticed that the tenor at Somerton, cast by the same founders (the Bilbies) runs,—

‘Frind [sic] Wroth and Knight [known founders],
For all your epite,
Ould Edw. Bilbie me rund.
Pull me round and hear me sound.
Frind, such work you never done.’

But Bilbie was not allowed to have it all his own way. On the 5th bell at Backwell we find—

‘Bilby and Boosh may come and see
What Evans and Nolt have done by Me.’

E. Cockey, who cast bells for Horsington, Stowell, and N. Cheriton, gets a challenge occasionally:—

‘Come here friend Knight and Cockey,
Such work as this you cannot do.’
(Thos. Bilbie, Milborne Port, 7th.)

And sometimes a severe snubbing:—

‘Be for [sic] I was abroke, I was as good as any,
But, when that Cockey casted I near was worth a penny.’
(Dunkerton.)

There is a very curious inscription on Queen Camel tenor:—

‘Heare I am, as you may see.
Wm. Penny and his wife gave me to this church,
Free to be mayntained for ever, 1633.
Ting, tang. Harck, Bessy Perry call,
Come to church and serve God all.’

Among the freaks of founders is that of placing the whole alphabet round the bell. There are only four such inscriptions in Somerset. One occurs in this deanery, viz., Clowsworth tenor. It is supposed to be the work of R. Sempson, who had a foundry at Aish Priors, near Taunton.

I will conclude my paper with some remarks on ringers and ringing.

‘Disturbers of the human race,
Your bells are always ringing;
I wish the ropes were round your necks,
And you with them were swinging.’

The ringer of the olden days was certainly not a very reputable character; indeed, the name was synonymous with idler and drunkard. Much, however, has been done in the way of belfry reform during the past thirty years. Good rules have been judiciously introduced, bells have been set in order, belfries brought down to the floor of the church, so that the ringers may exercise their functions *in conspectu ecclesie*, instead of being relegated to a loft, which it was very difficult to realise as being part of the sacred building. Above all, the clergy in many instances have taken an interest and a personal part in ringing. Still, there are many parishes which these and other desirable reforms have not reached.

1. I would plead strongly for all belfries being on the ground floor. The great opponents to this arrangement are architects. *Cuique in sua arte*, &c. Let architects stick to architectural arrangements pure and simple, and leave such abominations as ‘loft-belfries’ and ‘organ-chambers’ to be consigned to oblivion. As much harm has been done in the latter case to the tone of the instrument, which, when so treated, reminds one of a caged lion, as in the former case to the tone and conduct of the ringers.

2. If ringers are to be efficient, a better class of men must be introduced into our belfries. The thing must not be left in the hands of labourers. We want intelligent young farmers, and now and then the squire, and above all the parson, to become ringers; and I do not believe that ringers as a class will ever be much improved until this is the case. Mixed with a more intelligent class of men, and under good training, the labourer will make an efficient ringer, but never if left to himself or to his own class.

A Question.

SIR,—I live and am churchwarden in a country town of about 5000 inhabitants. We have a fine peal of eight bells, and fairly good ringing. A collection is made at Christmas time for funds to meet the expenses. After they are paid a surplus remains of about 10*l.*, which the ringing members of the Society claim, and desire should be divided amongst them, but which some few think should be reserved as a fund to meet accidental demands which may occur. Will some of your readers kindly give their experience and advice in such a matter?
CHURCHWARDEN.
October 25th.

Published: 31.x.1890

Churchwardens and Bells.

SIR,—Ringers can have no sort of right to demand that the surplus of a collection in aid of bell-ringing expenses should be shared out amongst themselves. The disposal of such a surplus is at the absolute discretion of the Churchwardens, subject of course to the general law which regulates the duty of Churchwardens. Churchwardens will be well advised to lay by any such surplus for unforeseen special expenses.
G. F. CHAMBERS.
1 Cloisters, Temple, November 1st, 1890.

Published: 7.xi.1890

3. I plead strongly for the cultivation of systematic change-ringing. I say ‘systematic’ because the so-called ‘changes’ of our country parishes are mostly ‘call-changes.’ But not even this is attempted in most country parishes, and the ear is wearied with the mechanical monotony of everlasting ‘rounds.’

‘But what can you do with a ring of three or four bells only?’ Well, these are the very belfries in which beginners should learn. It is only after mastering changes on this limited number of bells that it is possible to learn changes on five or six bells. If a man learns nothing but how to have a perfect management of his bell, so that he can pull her as he likes without looking at the rope (or blindfold), which he can learn on one bell (clapper-tied, of course), he has made the necessary start to enable him to take his place as a change-learner. It is, of course, necessary that however few the bells are, they should be properly hung and in good order. If not, it is the churchwardens’ business to see that they are in ringable order. If possible, every tower should have five bells, preferably six. Eight, to my mind, is the most satisfactory from a musical point of view. If there are only three, and the tower is big enough to hold two upper bells, and the necessary funds forthcoming, by all means have the additional bells, or the three old bells can be cast into five. A very light peal of five is infinitely preferable to a monotonous peal of three. If there is no room for the addition, a set of eight chimes can be had at a moderate cost, which will produce all the changes, although of course with nothing like the quality of tone obtainable from swung bells. All the changes can thus be learnt on the chimes before being attempted in a large belfry; or a set of handbells can be had for 3*l.* or 4*l.*, which will serve the same purpose.

I have not had the opportunity of learning change-ringing on church bells; but having some two years since joined a set of handbell-ringers, and learnt ‘Grandsire,’ I have been struck with the vast stores of real melody wrapped up in ‘changes,’ the greater part being a *terra incognita* even to the musician; while to the ear initiated to bell-changes, the beauty of melody is still further enhanced by the sequence, simple or complex, of the particular method in use. Now, all this is to be heard to perfection on the church bells, which besides giving fuller and more beautiful effects, heard far and wide, call forth from the ringers the exercise of muscle, nerve, quickness of eye and ear, a retentive memory, and all those qualities which expand under good training and discipline. Nor is this all. The cultivation of change-ringing, and the habits of discipline which it produces amongst the ringers, tend to create that proper feeling of reverence for God’s House which, alas! in too many instances has been conspicuous by its absence.

It is with this object in view that Associations of Change-ringers exist. One such Association has been established for the deaneries of Bath and Keynsham, and it is now proposed that this should be extended so as to become a diocesan organization. I earnestly hope that this may be carried out. Should such a Society be formed, it would be easy to distribute its operations into convenient districts. There are several churches in this deanery of Mazon with excellent rings of bells, and the incumbents and ringers would no doubt be glad to join in the proposed scheme. Such churches would form natural centres for stated practices or periodical meetings, while an annual meeting, preceded by Divine service, might be held at Wells, or some other large town in the diocese. The plan has worked well in the neighbouring dioceses of Exeter and Salisbury, and it has always surprised me that, considering the number of good belfries in the county of Somerset, nothing similar has been attempted in this diocese.

Published: 30.v.1890, 6.vi.1890 and 13.vi.1890

ON Tuesday, December 23rd, a set of eight tubular bells (supplied by Harrington, Lathom, & Co., of Coventry), erected in the tower of Holy Trinity Church, were dedicated by Bishop Mitchinson. These tubular bells were presented by the children of the late Mr. Samuel Ratcliff, of Highfields, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, to his memory. Among those present and taking part in the service were the Rev. H. B. St. John, vicar of Holy Trinity; Canon Denton, vicar of Ashby-de-la-Zouch; Rev. A. S. Mammatt, vicar of Packington, and others.

Published: 2.i.1891

THE spire of St. Helen’s Church, Ryde, Isle of Wight, which was built at the beginning of the last century, was, shortly after completion, struck by lightning, and it was believed that a large bell was broken at the same time. This week Mr. Calloway, one of the churchwardens, went into the belfry, and out of curiosity examined the bell. Instead of a crack he found a piece of wood, which had been broken from the wheel, was pressing against the bell and stopping the vibrations. On removing this the bell, after being muffled for 170 years, rang out in a way which astonished the inhabitants.

Published: 26.iii.1891

THE New Zealand *Church News* says that of the ten bells in Christchurch Cathedral eight were given by the late Mr. Robert Rhodes, and the two smaller ones by Mr. E. F. W. Miles. The total weight of the peal is 6 tons, 17 cwt., 24 lb. For more than the last 200 years bell-founding appears to have been the refuge for doggerel, and Christchurch has not escaped it. The following are the inscriptions cast on the bells. On the first and second bells :—

‘ We two little bells to complete the chime,
Were nearly left out too late,
When Miles to the rescue, but just in time,
Added us on to the eight.’

On the tenor bell :—

‘ Through all the roads of life, the best,
We’ll strive to be your guide ;
And let our notes do your behest
By tolling far and wide,
We’ve crossed the sea to this fair land,
To do God all the honour ;
From clime to clime we’ll ring our chime,
And tell of RHODES, the donor.’

Published: 14.iv.1891

THE Bishop of Salisbury on Friday dedicated a peal of bells which have been placed in All Saints’ Church, Wyke Regis, a village about a mile from Weymouth. This is the only peal in the neighbourhood. Towards the cost—600l.—there has been a most generous response. The peal consists of eight bells, three of which are the gifts of private individuals, and only about 100l. are now required. The bells are very musical in tone. They were rung by change-ringers from St. Peter’s, Bournemouth, on the occasion of their dedication.

Published: 22.v.1891

A FACILITY has been granted by Dr. T. H. Tristram, Q.C., chancellor of the diocese of Ripon, authorising the hanging of a ring of bells in the tower of the church of St. Barnabas, Heaton, Bradford. The bells are the gift of Mr. F. Illingworth, one of the parishioners.

Published: 7.viii.1891

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL’S tenor bell of the ring of eight hanging in the Norman tower, has a large crack at the part where the clapper strikes, and its recasting is a necessity. This bell was cast in 1734 by Richard Phelps, of London, and bears the inscription, ‘ God bless the Rev. Charles Naylor, dean, and the Rev. Prebends of this Church.’

Published: 7.viii.1891

Croyland Abbey and its Bells.

SIR,—On 23rd August, 1889, you kindly granted space in the pages of *Church Bells* for a short history of the bells of Croyland Abbey. I then appealed to the readers for help to make safe this venerable Benedictine monastery (part of which is still used as the Parish Church of Croyland), and which remains a striking proof of the architectural skill, charity, and power of religion in the days of old. Probably, as the work is now strictly connected with the bell-chamber, the readers of *Church Bells* may be drawn to give us help in raising the necessary funds, so that the bells of Croyland Abbey, after a silence of nearly four years, may resound again through the Lincolnshire Fens their sweet and melodious voice of welcome to this ancient House of Prayer. Sir—‘ tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon ’—to my appeal in *Church Bells* only a few of the readers responded by forwarding a donation!

In Croyland Abbey ‘ the first peal was hung, and the first happy marriages rung ’ in England. In 946 A.D. Abbot Thurkytel gave a peal of seven bells, and named them Guthlac, Bartholomew, Tatwyn, Detelin, Bega, and Pega. For nearly one thousand and fifty years the Croyland Abbey bells have (through the extended plains of South Holland) sent forth the melody of their sweet sound; hence the proverb, ‘ As sweet as Croyland bells.’

Shall this national relic be allowed to collapse for the sake of 1700l.? Surely not, if Churchmen come to our aid. The sum required for the bell-chamber is 440l. 15s. The perpendicular lines of the tower are now made safe, but the horizontals or bonders are urgently needed, and form our present danger. The oak beams of the bell-chamber are rotten, and three are broken.

Would it not be a discredit to the nation to allow this ancient historical Benedictine monastery, the nursing mother of Cambridge University, and the parish church of a large, but exceedingly poor, Lincolnshire benefice, to collapse through sheer neglect or apathy on our part? Surely, as the connecting link between the past and the future, we of the present age must do our duty to hand down to our children’s children this venerable relic, praying earnestly that the readers of *Church Bells* may now make a prompt and liberal response, as the work is urgent. Donors to the fund are requested to forward, with their donations, their names, designation, and address, that a numbered receipt may be forwarded per return of post. T. H. LE BOUR, Rector of Croyland, near Peterborough.

P.S.—It is a very interesting sight to see the men now at work on the outside of the steeple.

Published: 9.x.1891

‘ Ye ringers all observe these orders well—
He forfeits 12 pence that turns off a bell ;
And he that doth ring with either spurr or hatt,
His sixpence certainly shall pay for that.
He that doth spoile, or doth disturbe a peelee,
Shall pay his 4 pence for a * * of ale ;
And he that is heard to curse or swear,
Shall pay his 12 pence and forbear.
These customs elsewhere now be used,
Lest bells and ringers be abused.
Ye gallants then that on purpose come to ring,
See that ye coyne along with you do bring,
And further also that if you ring here,
You must ring truly both with hand and care ;
Or else your forfeits surely pay,
And that full speedily without delay.
Our laws is old that are not new,
The sexton looketh for his due.’

Chester, St John Baptist (1689) Published: 15.vii.1892

Iron Clappers or Wood Clappers?

SIR,—Having read a great deal in local papers respecting the incessant noise caused by the ringing of church bells, I beg to suggest as a remedy that if the clappers were made from teak or boxwood the tone would be so much more subdued, and less disagreeable to those who complain. Then probably we should hear more of the art of change-ringing than we do at the present time, instead of the monotonous tolling of one single bell, ofttimes emanating from bellries which contain a full peal. I, for one, should feel sorry that church bell-ringing should cease to exist, which, practically speaking, it does in some districts at the present time. C. WHEELER, 93 Hugh Street, Pimlico, S.W.

Published: 17.vii.1891

Church-bell Nuisance in Towns.

SIR,—I fear that your correspondent Mr. C. Wheeler’s suggestion about wooden clappers is hardly practicable, although I have heard of clappers being plugged with wood as a handbell clapper is with leather; but I fancy these must often want replugging.

Speaking generally of the nuisance caused by church bells in large towns, I believe that what is complained of comes chiefly from churches having a single noisy bell, and not from those possessing a peal.

I never could understand why, because one church which has a musical peal of bells rings or chimes for, say, half an hour, another with one noisy clanging bell in a turret should think it necessary to toll the same for a like period before a service. Surely in such a case a few strokes at half an hour or a quarter of an hour before, and again just before the commencement of Divine service, would be quite enough. With regard to single bells, a large one of not less than fifteen hundredweight in F is much more tolerable, and not nearly so noisy, as a small one of two or three hundredweight.

St. Ann’s Terrace, Salisbury, July 27th, 1891.

J. R. JERRAM.

Published: 14.viii.1891

An Appeal.

SIR,—We are sadly in need of a small bell for a Mission Church of which I have the charge. The one in use at present is *cracked*. The congregation—all poor—have done a great deal towards improving the church, but have not been able to raise sufficient funds to purchase a new bell.

Will any reader of *Church Bells* be good enough to give us one, or sell for a small sum?

PRIEST,

1 Radnor Place, Birkenhead.

Published: 25.ix.1891

THE bells of St. Paul’s Cathedral will be ‘ rung at an early hour this evening, instead of at midnight, as formerly, in consequence of the noisy assemblage last year in St. Paul’s Churchyard.

Published: 1.i.1892

A NEW bell, weighing 1½ tons, for St. Andrew’s Cathedral, Sydney, has been put into position. It was cast by Messrs. John Taylor & Sons, Loughborough, Leicestershire. The new bell was erected for the Cathedral Chapter by Mr. Henry Daly, who is the Australian agent for Messrs. Taylor. It is fixed in the northern tower of the Cathedral. The note is D.

Published: 8.i.1892

THE ancient bell of the church of Llanllynfi, in Wales, is now used to summon to service a congregation in Patagonia. In the interior of Patagonia there is a little colony of Welshmen, the majority of whom are Churchmen, and have built a church capable of holding about a hundred people. They are very proud of having secured a real church bell from the old country.

Published: 27.v.1892

A PEAL of bells, which have cost about 600l., are to be hung in the tower of Bolsterton parish church, Deepcar, near Sheffield, as a memorial of the Rev. John Bell, a former vicar of the parish.

Published: 10.vi.1892

A LARGE part of the wall of the tower of the parish church, Great Chishall, Essex, fell in with a loud crash on Tuesday morning. Signs of lateral expansion of the tower had been noticed lately, and on Monday a survey had been made with a view to removing the peal of bells which are now in a dangerous position.

Published: 22.vii.1892

‘ If to ring you do come here
You must ring well with hand and ear ;
And if a bell you over Thro
Sixpence you pay be Fore you Go
And if you do sware or Curs
Twelve pence is due Pool out your Purs
And if you ring with spur or Hatt
Fore pence you are to pay for that
Our laws are old they are not New
The Clark and ringers will claim their dew.
1744.’

Condoover, St Andrew Published: 22.vii.1892

'You that are Ringers or wou'd learn to Ring
observe these orders well in every thing
He that for want of care o'er turns a Bell
shall 2d. pay in Money not in Ale
And he that rings with either Spur* or Hat
shall pay His 6d. certainly for that
He that presumes to Ring and spoils a Peal
shall 6d. pay in Money or in Ale
These orders well observe and then you may
with Pleasure spend with us this joyfull day.'

These rules are cut in a stone tablet inserted in the belfry wall.
* 'Spur' seems to refer to ringers who have ridden some distance to ring.

Salford, Holy Trinity Published: 14.iv.1893

The Passing Bell.

SIR,—The custom of tolling the 'Passing Bell' (so called) is yet observed in the parish of Rothbury, Northumberland, by which the parishioners are informed of the solemn fact that one of their friends and neighbour has been called to his long home, for it is not until after the death has actually taken place that the sexton is requested by the relatives to toll the bell. After the bell has been tolled for about fifteen minutes the *sex* of the deceased person is denoted by giving a certain number of sharp strokes, as follows: Nine strokes for a man, six for a woman, and three for a child. An interesting account of the 'Passing Bell' (properly so called) is to be found in Brand's *Popular Antiquities* (Bohn's 'Antiquarian Library'), vol. ii. pp. 202 to 220. D. D. DIXON.

Rothbury.

Published: 17.iii.1893

The Passing Bell.

SIR,—The custom of ringing the 'Passing Bell' is very general in this neighbourhood. At the parish church in this town the mode of ringing is as follows:—Before raising the bell three distinct strokes are given if the deceased is a man, two for a woman, and one for a child. At the conclusion of the tolling, after the bell has been lowered, three strokes are struck for a man, two strokes for a woman, and one three for a child.

Wisbech.

O. H. SUTHERLAND.

Published: 4.iv.1893

It is proposed to place a peal of bells in the new church at Scunthorpe in memory of the late Lord St. Oswald by whom the church was erected.

Published: 24.ii.1893

THE EDITOR would be glad to be informed of the address of a farmhouse in the Midlands where there is an interesting old bell bearing the initials 'H. S.', and the date 1590.

Published: 5.v.1893

AN ANCIENT BELL.—The Editor would be glad to have the address of the farmhouse in a Midland county where there is an old bell bearing the initials 'H. S.', and the date 1590.

Published: 23.vi.1893

Ringling French Bells.

SIR,—I shall be infinitely obliged if some of your readers can give me any information respecting (1) the method of hanging, (2) the method of ringing, French bells.

At our church here (St. John's) we were presented, some two years ago, with a peal of four (Do, Mi, Sol, Do) bells of a most splendid tone, but we find great difficulty in ringing them, as there seems to be little or no control over them.

I shall be pleased at any time to show the bells to any campanologist who will first communicate with me.

CHARLES H. GIER.

St. John's Choir School, St. Leonards-on-Sea.

Published: 14.vii.1893

CANON DOWNING, of Llandaff Cathedral, has accepted the office of secretary to the recently formed Llandaff Diocesan Bell-ringers' Association, of which the Bishop is president and the Dean and archdeacons of the diocese vice-presidents.

Published: 27.x.1893

SERVICES in connexion with the dedication of the new bells, and the re-hanging of the fine old peal, will be held on Tuesday in the Priory Church, Leominster, as follows:—At 8 a.m. there will be a celebration of the Holy Communion; 12.30 p.m., dedication of the new bells (in the Norman church); 7 p.m., full festal evensong. The dedication will be performed by the Bishop of Shrewsbury, who will also preach at the evening service. The services will be continued on Sunday, November 25th.

Published: 16.xi.1894

THE tower of St. Columb Church, Cornwall, was struck by a thunderbolt on Sunday night. The service had just commenced when a flash of bluish colour and intense brilliancy was seen, followed by a deafening crash. The belfry was practically wrecked. The congregation were much alarmed, but no one was injured except one of the ringers.

Published: 11.i.1895

The Passing Bell.

SIR,—It has been suggested that the explanation of the proverb, 'Nine tailors make a man,' is that it is a corruption of 'Nine tellers make a man,' i.e., the three times three strokes on the passing bell, which indicate that the person who is tolled for is a man. But I find that this custom is by no means invariable, and I thought it would be interesting to learn from some of your correspondents what different customs they are familiar with in the matter, and what light they can throw on the subject.

A. F.

The Residence, Southwell, Notts.

Published: 21.x.1892

The Passing Bell.

SIR,—The subject which is alluded to by 'H. F.' is one of considerable interest in many of its connexions. The suggestion that nine tailors, or tolls, is represented in the allusion to 'nine tailors making a man,' as it is also put in North's *Church Bells of Northamptonshire*, seems to be far-fetched, as it appears that 'nine tailors make a man' is a corruption of a very reverse and true saying, 'that one tailor was the making of nineteen men,' or as the idea is, in poetical language, 'Men three-parts made by tailors and by barbers.'

The great Lord Burleigh, it is said, used to observe when he threw off his *treasury robes*, 'these lye lord treasurer,' and, as further observed in a reference work of 1890, 'would it not be somewhere about the mark if, when two-thirds of our sprigs of fashion took off their clothes were to say, "there lyes manhood."'

It is, it appears, quite true that the old custom of tolling three-times-three for a man's, and three-times-two for a woman's passing knell, is not by any means adhered to in these days in various counties, or parts of counties. The usual custom referred to in the ancient Homily by Hone and others in connexion with man's representation of the Trinity, &c., seems to have died out to a large extent.

My deceased friend Mr. Stahlschmidt put it on record that in Kent, at one hundred and five places the old custom of threes and twos for sexes was continued, whilst at about thirty-six places variations were found; and at fourteen places in Surrey the old custom prevailed. Neither Messrs. Ellacombe or North seem to have directed their attention to the continuance or disuse of the custom in detail.

In a very valuable Church weekly of 1846 a review is given of a course of sermons, in which the following quotations appear bearing on this point:—'In life or death we (Christians and Churchmen) are members one of another.' 'Too true, however, is it that to multitudes who are called by the name of Christ, self is everything and Christian fellowship nothing. We have lost those true Catholic feelings of mutual interest for and in each other, and for all that everywhere are called by the name of Christ, which were eminently characteristic of the first ages of the Church.' 'This want of regard is illustrated by the fact that few, if any, when they hear the passing bell, ever think of praying for the passing soul.'

And this is probably the reason why we seldom, if ever, 'hear that bell at all before the soul has passed away.'

'Praying for the dying has indeed been forgotten by us, and so the passing bell has been an unmeaning thing.'

S. B. GOSLIN.

Bishopsgate, E.C.

Published: 18.xi.1892

CUSTODY, ETC., OF 'CHURCH BELLS'.—Robert Cross, Bakewell, writes: 'Possibly it may interest others as well as myself if you could say to whom do the parish church bells belong? Who can order or forbid the ringing of them? Who can engage or dismiss ringers?'

[They belong to the Church. Their legal control is regulated by the Canons of 1603. By Canon 88 the wardens, or questmen, and their assistants are prohibited from allowing the bells to be rung at any time without good cause to be allowed by the clergyman and by themselves. Dr. Phillimore says that, although the churchwardens may concur in the ringing and tolling of the bells, the incumbent may, nevertheless, prevent the wardens from ringing or tolling them at undue hours or without just cause. Lord Stowell also gives the opinion that the bells cannot be rung without the consent of the incumbent, and declares that the 88th Canon is precise upon this point, and binding upon the churchwardens.—Ed.]

Published: 28.iv.1893

Queries and Replies.

THE CONTROL OF BELLS.—Mr. H. Allen, Commercial School, 1 Maids Vale, Taunton writes:—'As a reader of your valuable paper (a copy of which I have received regularly and have valued for above sixteen years), may I ask you for the following information? What is the law (if there is any) with regard to having "a peal of bells" for ringing in a tower or spire? In this town we have (in the borough, I mean) three parishes, St. Mary's, St. James, and Wilton. In the parish church towers there are "peals of bells." In the Borough there are also three District churches, Holy Trinity, St. John's, and St. Andrew's. In each of these there is only one bell for tolling for service or other purposes. Please state whether parish churches only have the right to use the peal of bells, or, if there are exceptions, what are they?'

[We are not quite sure that we rightly understand our correspondent's inquiry; but, if he means in whom is the control of the bells in any church vested, the answer is, in the incumbent so far as all practical purposes are concerned. It is true that by Canon 88 the churchwardens or questmen have a certain limited control over the bells, but Dr. Phillimore says, nevertheless, the incumbent may prevent them from using them at undue hours or without just cause. Lord Stowell also gave the opinion that the bells could not be rung without the consent of the incumbent, and considered that the 88th Canon was precise on the point, and binding on the churchwardens.—Ed. C. B.]

Published: 15.ix.1893

Wanted, a Bell for New Zealand.

SIR,—As pastor of a very large parochial district in Otago, New Zealand, extending over about 1600 square miles, I write, hoping to awaken the practical sympathy of your readers. Of the six divisions of my district, one consists of a coal-mining population, where the very small proportion of Church people (the whole place being a Presbyterian settlement) have combined and built a little wooden church.

The average congregation not being a large one, the want is much felt of a bell to call them together. The poverty of the people quite prevents the idea of obtaining one for themselves, and this must be my excuse for this appeal, as I promised them I would do my best while in England to make their want known, and I have no doubt that some of my brother clergy who are restoring or enlarging their own churches will be also requiring larger bells, and may have laid aside one which would be quite big enough for us, and which they would be glad to give. Of course I will take upon myself all expenses of carriage, &c.

T. FRANK DODD, Curate-in-Charge of Inch-Clutha, Balclutha
Kaiauaug Clinton, and Owaka.

5 Holmesdale Road, Sevenoaks, July 14th.

Published: 20.vii.1894

Bell Clappers.

SIR,—In your 'Art of the Bell-founder,' stress is laid on the iron clapper. Now, it seems to me that iron is not the right metal to make a clapper of, unless it is needed for the sound. Hand-bells are hit with leather on this account—because of the frequency one sees bells have to be quarter-turned. Cannot the clapper be the one to suffer, and not the bell, in which case the arm might be of iron, and then a double boss of bell-metal, like a 'dumb-bell,' shrunk on to it, in which case the bell would have an even chance of resisting its opponent?

F. W.

Published: 1.iii.1895

‘Noisy’ Bells.

SIR,—We have a remarkably fine toned and powerful peal of eight bells at St. Helen's Church, Worcester, as many of your readers are aware; but, unfortunately, there is no doubt that they are hung about thirty feet too low. The consequence is that the *clang* and *jar* is very great in the immediate neighbourhood, more especially in the case of one house which is situated at the end of an enclosed paved courtyard immediately below the tower. Can any of your many readers who are experienced in bells inform me (1) whether there is any satisfactory and inexpensive method of covering the windows of the belfry (with wood and felt) so as to modify the sound of the bells, and (2) whether there is any contrivance of leathern caps for the clappers possible, which would have the effect of softening without actually ‘muffling’ their sound? I shall be very grateful for any suggestions. At present the only alternative to ‘getting myself disliked’ in certain quarters seems to be total prohibition of ringing, which I am most unwilling to resort to; and, indeed, I feel sure some artificial means may be found for making the bells more tolerable even to those who object to them.

CHARLES CHATTON, Rector of St. Helen's, Worcester.
St. Helen's Rectory, Worcester.

Published: 5.iv.1895

Noisy Bells.

SIR,—Neither of the modes suggested for subduing the noise would be practicable without destroying the *tone* of the bells. But it would be quite possible to contrive a system of deep reversed louvers which would disperse the sound upwards and away, instead of its falling immediately on the heads of those below, and without doing injury to their tone. It is a great pity that the present system of proportioning bells is such as to produce the largest amount of sound to be heard in the distance, instead of deepening the tone.

30a Wimpole Street, W.

WILLIAM WHITE, F.S.A.

[We have ourselves seen the bells in question, but it is many years ago, and we forget the position of the bells with respect to the windows. Complete success has been attained in other instances by bricking up the lower portion of the windows, so that the only open portion is well above the mouth of the bells when set. This sends the sound out and away without either destroying or smothering the tone. Possibly structural difficulties may prevent its adoption at St. Helen's.—Ed.]

Published: 11.iv.1895

Australia.

SIR,—We are much in need of a bell for our church. In the heart of the Australian ‘bush’ the sound of a church bell is seldom heard.

My mission district covers 1500 square miles, and our Church people scattered over this vast area have built two churches, and are proceeding with a third and a parsonage house. Will some kind friend or friends give us a bell for at least the mother church? We are in the diocese of Bathurst, lying west of the Blue Mountains. A bell sent to the care of our good Bishop at Bathurst would reach me.

R. MONTGOMERY,
Narramine, January 22nd, 1895. Mission Chaplain.

Published: 11.iv.1895

LORD RAYLEIGH will pay the debt on the Terling Church bells out of the prizes he has received for his discovery of argon. Lord Rayleigh is the patron of the living, and his country seat is in the district.

Published: 21.ii.1896

Dedication of Church Bells.

SIR,—Can any of your readers tell me of two or three good sermons on this subject, to assist me in preparing one for the reopening of our belfry, after the bells have been rehung, &c.?

UPPER.

Published 17.iv.1896

Inscriptions upon Bells.

SIR,—Although I have been a continuous reader of *Church Bells* from its commencement, I do not recall seeing any lists of quaint inscriptions upon bells. If I am correct, would it not be interesting to those who are fond of bells to invite your readers to furnish authenticated copies of bell inscriptions? It might be of double advantage, as it might possibly lead some of your readers to dive into the intricacies of the ancient bell-frames, and possibly induce those who are responsible for their custody to put them into clean and working order.

If I am not correct, perhaps you would kindly point me to the year in which the list of inscriptions appeared.

In our church we have three bells. The tenor has this very dull and prosaic inscription:—‘Samuel Walker, Esq., Benjamin Sales, Churchwardens, 1722.’

The second is a fourteenth-century bell, bearing the partial inscription, ‘HUIUS SCE MICHAELIS.’

The treble has an ornamental band composed of a repetition of the founder's mark, ‘S. S. EKHON’ (probably Samuel Sellers, York), between two bells.

Above is the inscription in another ornamental band, ‘Gloria Deo in Altissimis, 1678.’

It is probable that the three original bells were dedicated respectively to the three Archangels, Raphael, Michael, and Gabriel. Can any expert complete the inscription of which that on the second is a part—‘HUIUS SCE MICHAELIS?’

VIGARIUS.

[Many bell inscriptions have appeared in our columns. We shall be happy to receive more.—Ed.]

Published: 26.vii.1895

Sermons on Bells.

SIR,—I have much pleasure in replying to ‘Upper's’ letter in last week's issue. Doubtless he has, or will get, Rev.—Ellacombe's sermon, *Bells of the Church* (1862), published by Bell & Daldy, London.

His Grace the Archbishop of York preached a sermon at St. Mary Abbott's, Kensington; and the Rev. H. A. Cockey, of Oldland, Bristol, who probably might be able to let you have notes. There is a sermon published in Ellacombe's *Bells of the Church*, ‘Select sermon by Laurence Beyerlink, canon of Antwerp (Cologne, 1627), on bells.’

A very good sermon on bells was preached (and published) by the Rev. Father John Proctor, O.P., Newcastle, in 1881, and in which there are some very good sentiments, well adapted for Anglicans. Copies of this are scarce. I could get some passages copied out if he wishes. I take great interest in the subject.

S. B. GOSLIN.

Bishopgate Foundry, 13 Artillery Lane, Bishopsgate.

Published: 24.iv.1896

LOVE OF THE PEOPLE FOR THEIR CHURCH BELLS.

In the village of Fulbourn, near Cambridge, there were formerly two churches in one churchyard, those of All Saints' and St. Vigor. On Trinity Sunday, 1766, the steeple of All Saints' fell down, luckily at five in the morning, when no one was about. There were five bells in the tower, two of which were broken by the crash. Things remained as they were for nine years, when an Act was passed to enable the Rector and churchwardens to sell the materials of the ruined church, and repair its dilapidated sister with the proceeds. The amount raised was but 150*l*. The broken bells, the three sound ones, and the two belonging to St. Vigor's, were all recast by Arnold, of St. Neots, and the new peal of six was put up on the 9th of May, 1776, at a cost of 308*l*.

We are told that the poor inhabitants were so attached to the old bells of All Saints' that they watched them lying amid the ruins for a long time, lest they should be carried away. Their fears at length subsided, and one night the churchwardens did manage to carry them off to St. Neots. This occasioned a ballad to be written by a labouring man, which bore very hardly on the the Fulbourn farmers. The first verse runs thus:—

‘There are some farmers in Fulbourn town,
They have lately sold what was not their own;
They have sold the bells, likewise the church,
And cheat the poor of twice as much.

And, O! you Fulbourn farmers, O!’

But the village rhymester had no reason to lampoon the farmers, and, without doubt, he repented of his smartness in a year's time, when the new peal of six were on their way to St. Vigor's. Indeed, the Rector's churchwarden, Mr. Edward Hancock, whose name deserves to be remembered, conducted the Bill through both Houses of Parliament without the expense of a solicitor.

When the bells were on their way home, the people drew the waggon a furlong or more, and an enthusiast, named Salisbury, rode on the great bell whilst it was drawn up within the steeple. Strange to say, his was the first death the same bell was tolled for, and that within two months of its being hung in the new bell-frame.

A. L. I.

Published: 28.viii.1896

Iron Bell Frames.

SIR,—I should be much obliged for your opinion, or the opinion of your readers with practical experience, on the advantages or disadvantages of iron bell frames.

My bells require to be rehung in a new frame, and oak, teak, and iron have been suggested. The tenor is 30 cwt. VICAR.

Published: 27.xi.1896

Queries and Replies.

BELL FRAMES.—In reply to 'Vicar,' I, as a ringer and teacher, would strongly recommend a large oak frame, if the space in the bell-chamber be sufficient, because it allows greater freedom in moving above and among the bells for oiling, adjusting ropes, screwing up, tying clappers and muffles, and fixing dumb-practice apparatus, clock-hammers, &c.—OAK.

Published: 4.xii.1896

ON Sunday, the congregation at a baptismal service at St. Nicholas' Church, Strood, Kent, were alarmed by a portion of the ceiling falling, whilst simultaneously the feet and legs of a man were seen dangling through the lath and plaster. After a period of suspense, he drew himself up and appeared later from the belfry in an agitated condition. He proved to be a new bell-ringer, who, not realising the danger, had been walking along the roof. He had the greatest difficulty in saving himself from falling entirely through.

Published: 5.iii.1897

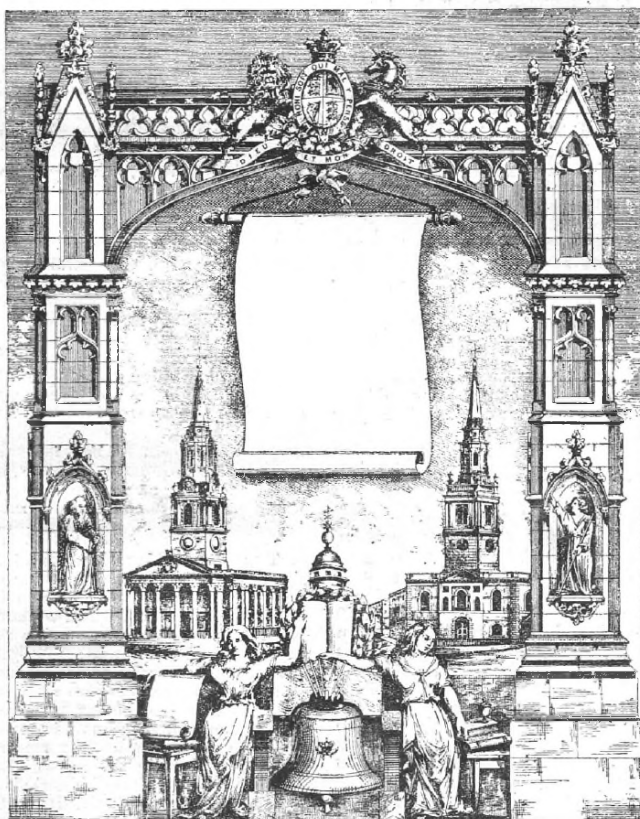
The Possibilities of Bell-ringing.

FROM our enterprising contemporary, the *Windsor Magazine* (Christmas number), we quote the following extract from an excellent article on 'Bell-ringing,' which shows that the subject is becoming an increasingly popular one outside the limits of the belfry:—

'The question is often asked, "Is not bell-ringing very hard work?" The answer is, It depends entirely on the condition of the fittings and frame, and the way in which the bells have been hung. The wood is well-seasoned oak, and a good many of the finest frames have come from Sussex. It is often harder work to ring a treble bell of five or six hundredweight for half an hour, when badly hung in a crazy frame, than it is to ring a tenor of two tons weight for three hours, when well hung in a rigid frame. It is impossible for even a strong man to ring some bells for any length of time, while others of greater weight might be rung by a child. Not long ago the treble of a ring of eight was rung successfully through a peal of 5040 changes by a young girl of fifteen. And there have been two occasions when eight men have rung uninterruptedly for over ten hours to accomplish a peal of nearly 17,000 changes. Bell-ringing, therefore, under proper conditions, demands skill and a certain amount of staying power rather than physical strength.'

The article also gives the following interesting information with regard to the ringing societies:—

'The earliest metropolitan society appears to have been the "Scholars of Cheapside," founded in 1603, according to the late Rev. H. T. Ellacombe. The "Ancient Society of College Youths" succeeded it in 1637. Side by side with the College Youths there soon sprang up other societies. The "London Scholars," who afterwards, out of compliment to a certain victorious Royal Duke, changed their title to the "Royal Cumberland Youths," came into existence at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and were followed a few years later—about 1715—by the "Union Scholars," which society had a brief but glorious existence of about forty years. The College and Cumberland Youths are the two chief London societies at the present day, and between them they number in their ranks almost all the leading ringers in the country; but the first-named has by far the longest list of members.'

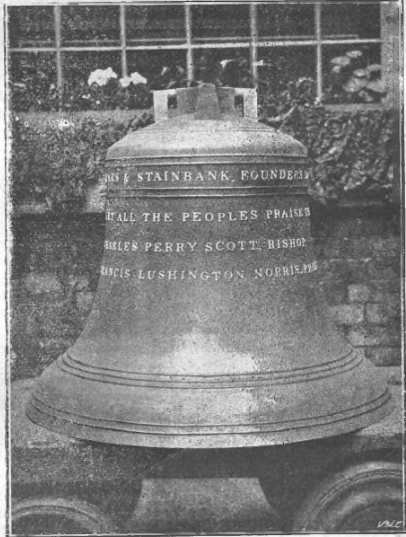


CERTIFICATE OF THE SOCIETY OF ROYAL CUMBERLAND YOUTHS.

Published: 18.xii.1896

The North China Mission.

THE Rev. O. P. Wardell-Yerburgh, rector of Christ Church, South Marylebone, and Commissary for the Bishop of North China, writes to us as follows: 'Some years ago you allowed me to appeal to "bell-ringers" for a complete set of handbells for the Church of England Mission in Peking, North China. The result was eminently satisfactory, as I was able to send out a set of nearly fifty bells, which have been in constant use since then by the members of the Mission. I have now sent out to the



TENOR BELL FOR THE CHURCH AT TIENTSIN.

Rev. F. L. Norris, son of the late Venerable Archdeacon Norris, a tenor bell for his church at Tientsin. Mr. Norris has raised 54*l.* towards the cost of the bell, carriage, insurance, &c., leaving a sum of 10*l.* to be raised at home. I feel sure that there are many ringers who would like to help in raising this amount. Donations for this purpose will be thankfully received by me at 10 Dorset Square, N.W. If this should meet with a generous response, as I trust it will, the balance, after paying the debt on the present bell, will be kept for the purpose of adding a ring of bells later on. The bell is from the foundry of Messrs. Mears & Stainbank, and, in addition to the names of the Bishop and Mr. Norris, bears this text: "Let all the peoples praise Thee."

We feel sure that many of our readers will show their interest in this request, more especially as Mr. Wardell-Yerburgh is himself a member of the Ancient Society of College Youths.

Published: 20.viii.1897

H. P. B. asks if any of the readers of *Church Bells* could inform him of any church in England where there still exists the old Sancte Bell—a small bell which hangs in the chancel. He believes that there are very few left, and only knows of one.

Published: 8.vii.1898

THE tower of the Parish Church of Strood, Rochester, destroyed by fire last December, has been restored, and a new peal of bells and a clock have been added. The restoration cost 2000*l.*

Published 8.xii.1899

THE Bishop of Ely has dedicated the restored tower of the Parish Church of Clare, Suffolk. The bells, which have been silent for a quarter of a century, have been rehung. The Queen sent a message 'conveying her congratulations to those who assisted in the initiation and successful completion of the work.'

Published: 30.xi.1900

RINGING CHURCH BELLS BY ELECTRICITY.

Whilst welcoming electricity as a motive power for train or trams, the *Home Counties Magazine* utters 'a protest against the needless wounding of aesthetic feeling by the proposal of an Essex clergyman to ring church bells by electricity. Does this gentleman simply regard church bells as useful machines for calling people to church? Is the poetry of bell-ringing, is the beauty of the labour it entails, lost on him?'

Published: 18.i.1901

A Statutory Limitation of the Number of Church Bells.

SIR,—In 1729 an Act was passed 'for providing a maintenance for the minister of the new church near Bloomsbury Market,' now known as St. George's, Bloomsbury. The Act (3 Geo. II., cap. 19) contains this clause: 'Provided nevertheless, and it is hereby enacted, that there shall not be hung up in the steeple or tower of the church any more than one bell at one time.' Can any of your readers furnish instances of a similar prohibition of the number of bells in a church? About fifty years ago a movement was started in favour of a full peal at St. George's, but it came to nothing, some of the objectors having perhaps discovered the clause quoted above.

R. B. P.

Published: 10.v.1901

Who will offer a Bell?

SIR,—I constantly see in your columns the accounts of new bells being set up in different places. What becomes of the old ones? I venture to ask the question in the hope that some of your many readers might have compassion on this far-off parish and spare me a couple of bells, which are greatly needed. The parish of the Huon is very large and widely scattered (over fifty miles in one direction), and comprises a great number of townships and bush hamlets, with a population of over 6000. During the twenty-four years I have been in charge we have raised close on 3000*l.* for church buildings, &c., but I have not been able to get bells for two of my churches. In both cases we have had to fight our way step by step against the strongest opposition, and it would be a real benefit if we could give audible evidence of the ministrations of the Church. One kind though unknown friend has already sent me one bell for another church, and I should be most thankful if I could be further assisted in the same way. In districts so widely scattered, a bell is almost a necessity.

EDWARD H. THOMPSON, *Priest-in-Charge.*
The Rectory, Franklin, Tasmania, May 3rd, 1901.

Published: 28.vi.1901

Early Bell-founders and their Work.

THE names of no very early bell-founders have come down to us, partly from the fact that it is a comparatively late custom for the makers to place their names on their work. Probably the bell-founder's art was originally practised almost exclusively by ecclesiastics. St. Dunstan was instrumental in hanging bells in the Cathedral of Canterbury, over which he ruled from 954 to 968, and it is recorded that he not only gave bells, but also a series of rules for their correct use. Being a practised artificer, it is highly probable that the founding of these bells would be at least superintended by him in person. A disciple of his, St. Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester from 963 to 984, followed his master in his love for the mechanical arts, and under his supervision bells were cast and hung in the Abbey Church at Abingdon. Another even more famous Abbot was Thurkytel of Croyland, who, about the year 930, cast the great bell of his Abbey, and named it after the patron saint, St. Guthlac; and subsequently Egelric, a later abbot, added others, whose combined music was 'the most exquisite harmony,' according to the chronicler, Ingulphus.

As churches and monastic houses increased in number, naturally the art of bell-founding drifted into the hands of a professional class, and scattered records of some of its members have come down to our time. In 1299 there was at Lynn, in Norfolk, one Master John the Founder, and we find records of two others of the same trade at this place during the following century. The chief centres of this art in England in mediæval days were York, Gloucester, and London. John of York was a great bell-founder of about the middle of the fourteenth century, whose works are to be found in several places in the midland counties, as for example at Sproxtton, in Leicestershire, where a bell is inscribed: 'Iohannes de Yorke me fecit in honore beata Marie.' The Fabric Rolls of York Minster mention a bell-founder of the name of John Hoton, in the year 1473. In the belfry of Christ Church, King's Court, York, is a bell dated 1659, which was cast by William Cureton, of Toft Green. At the same place Samuel Smith, father and son, carried on the business of bell-founding for many years. The father died in 1709, and the son, who was Sheriff in 1723-4, followed him in 1731; both being buried at Holy Trinity Church, Micklegate, York, where one of their bells hangs. Other examples of their work are found at St. Martin's, St. Margaret's, St. Crux, St. Cuthbert's, and St. Mary's in the city of York, and at numerous other places, as at Filey, where three bells bears their mark 'S. S. Ebor,' together with the dates 1675, 1682, and 1700. Another father and son who were alike in name and business were the two bell-founders named Edward Seller. They cast a bell for the church of St. Denis in 1718, the whole ring of eight for St. Martin-le-Grand, Coney Street, in 1729, and a single one for St. Saviour's in 1730. The son, who was Sheriff in 1731-2, died in 1764. Curious to relate, yet a third case meets us in York of this industry passing from father to son in the case of George and Robert Dalton. The foundry of this firm was in Stonegate, and bells therefrom still hang in the steeples of St. Margaret's (one bell dated 1788) and of St. Olave's (six bells dated 1789). With the death of the younger Dalton within the present century, the pursuit of the bell-founder's art in the city of York ceased.

The originator of the industry at Gloucester seems to have been a man named Alexander, or Sandre, early in the fourteenth century, who combined with bell-founding the craft of potter. In 1346, mention is made in the Fabric Roll of Ely Cathedral of bells made by John of Gloucester, who probably succeeded Sandre in his business. The best known of the Gloucester founders, however, is Abraham Rudhall, who was established there in 1684. His descendants continued to follow the same art, and their works are found in many places—a fine ring of ten at Wrexham, for example, coming from their foundry in 1726. Half a century later they issued a statement showing that, down to Lady Day, 1774, the Rudhall family had turned out 3594 bells, including those at St. Dunstan's-in-the-East, St. Bride's, and St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, London.

Of the founders in the metropolis, one of the most conspicuous names is that of Robert Mot, who established the Whitechapel Bell-foundry in the sixteenth century. This passed at a later date into the hands of Messrs. Lester & Pack, who cast among others the great bell at Canterbury in 1762. The moulding in this case was intrusted to William Chapman, a nephew of the senior partner in the firm, which shortly after included him and became Pack & Chapman.

Amongst those who witnessed the casting of the great bell at Canterbury, was a young man who evinced so strong an interest

in the work that Chapman took notice of him, and offered to make a bell-founder of him if he would go to London. This was William Mears, and from this incident it came to pass that subsequently the foundry became the property of the Mears family. The rings of twelve at Cambridge, Shoreditch, Cornhill, Birmingham, Cheapside, Cripplegate, Norwich, Wakefield, Halifax, Shrewsbury, Sheffield, Quex Park, Oldham, Leeds, West Bromwich, Yarmouth, and York, are all productions from the Whitechapel Foundry, as also are the famous tens at Rotherham, Coventry, and Stepney. John of York is supposed to have introduced the industry into Leicestershire, and to have been succeeded by the Newcombes, one of whose bells hung in the Parish Church of Loughborough until the whole ring was recast by a later successor, Thomas Eayres of Kettering and St. Neots. The next to take up the work was Edward Arnold, who cast bells for Quorndon in 1773, and for Rothley in 1784.

Other English founders were Miles Graye, who cast bells for Baldock, Herts, in 1650 and 1655; William Oldfield, of Doncaster, who cast the great bell at Snaith in 1624; Henry Knight, of Reading, who recast six bells at Newbury in 1680, making them a ring of eight; the Norrises, who throughout the whole of the seventeenth century carried on the work of bell-founding at Stamford; and the Bibbles, who from 1700 to 1815 had a foundry at Chewstoke, in Somersetshire. In many cases it is certain that the bell-founder did not devote himself exclusively to that work. Ropeforde cast bells for Exeter Cathedral in 1284 and was also intrusted with the repairing of the organ and the horloge there; similarly Thomas Chyche, in 1500, supplied King's College, Cambridge, both with bells for its chapel and cooking-pots for its kitchen. Richard de Wimbish was a potter of London, who also cast bells in the early part of the fourteenth century.

[The above is an extract from the Rev. G. S. Tynocke's new work (published by Wm. Andrews & Co.), of which a review will shortly appear in our columns.]

Bell-notes from Parish Registers.

It will be interesting to glean a few notes from some parish registers with reference to church bells. We can only expect incidental references to bells in the registers. Entries of birth, or death, or marriage need not include any allusion to ringing. Such allusions do, however, occur at times, for the very reason that the registers have, fortunately, not been limited to dry statistics. Various little things, many of which are of the deepest interest to us, and which yet did not originally claim a place in the register, have been entered by the gossiping parson or churchwarden, and the use of the parish register has been often given a wide breadth and inclusiveness. For this we are very thankful. In the register at Leyland, Lancashire, we have a memorandum referring to the fees of ringers. The date is November 4th, 1664 :—

‘It is concluded upon by Mr. Rothwell vicar and the Churchwardens now in being that the ringers appointed by them shall observe to ring in due time on Sundays and take the benefit of ringing at Burials and other times to be divided amongst them by equal portions and received and distributed by Peter Tootell Clarke or Robert Sargeant and hereunto the ringers doe subscribe their names the day and year above written.’

Some entries contain special reference to curfew-ringing. Benevolent persons have sometimes given a species of endowment for the curfew. For example, at Barton, in Lincolnshire, a lady

who had lost her way on the wolds was enabled to reach home by the guiding sound of St. Peter's bell. She was so grateful that she gave a piece of land to the parish clerk, on condition that he should ring the bell from seven to eight every evening during the winter half of the year, Sundays excepted. Something very similar seems to have been done at St. Margaret's-on-Cliffe, in Kent. An entry in the register for the year 1696 is as follows :—

‘Whereas there has been, and is at this time, a parcel of land in this parish, called by the name of the Curfew Land, consisting of five rods more or less; which for some time since hath been given by a shepherd, who one night fell over the Cliff, yet lived so long as to make the said bequest for ringing of a curfew-bell at eight of the clock every night for the Winter half-year, viz. from Michaelmas Day to Lady Day; and now finding the great neglect for some yeares past in the due ringing thereof, and to prevent, for the future, any danger which may ensue to travellers and others being so near the Cliffe, for want of the due and constant ringing, if possible the like Providence may not befall any others,—we, the minister, Churchwardens, and others, the Parishioners, whose names are underwritten, in reference to the performance of the donor's good intent, do hereby order and decree that the said Curfew Bell be hereafter rung—as at the neighbouring parishes it is—constantly every night in the week, all the aforesaid winter half-year, the full time of a quarter of an hour at the least, without any exceptions of Sunday nights or Holy-Day nights, and he that rings is to have and receive the benefit and profit of the said Curfew-Land, provided that he whoever is or shall be clerk of the Parish shall have the refusal of it before any other, if he will accordingly perform the contents above specified. But if not, then it shall be at the Minister's and Churchwardens' disposal, to let any other have it, who will ring it accordingly. And in case it shall not be constantly rung, as is afore specified, it shall be lawful for the said Minister and Churchwardens to receive the rent from him who occupies the land, and to deduct out of it, for every night it shall not be rung, two pence for any commission which shall be given to the poor that come constantly to Church.’

It would thus appear that the ringing of curfew had its definite usefulness, and was not merely a meaningless survival of old custom.

We read, in the register of Penn, Staffordshire, that the ringer, on coming out of church one night after performing his duty, found a deserted child tied to the church door :—

‘1750, March 25, Mary Penn, foundling, bapt. The child was found tied up in a cloth and hung to the ring upon the south door of Penn church, about eight o'clock p.m. by William Baker, as he was coming out of church after the ringing of the Curfew Bell.’

In a Lincolnshire register we have a contract with regard to the repairing of the bells. The date is 1578 :—

‘It was agreed, upon the XVIth of Novemb. anno 1578, betwixt the Churchwardens and the rest of the parish of Wragble, and Thomas Milner of Wragble aforesaid, that he, the said Thomas Milner, shall from the XVIth day of November of his owne costes and charges, maintaine, uphold, and keepe, all the bells within the Church of Wragble with hempe, lether and greas, with all their furniture belonging to the said bells, as often as need shall require; brass and iron, and wood, for yokes and wheles excepted, whiche is to be found of the charges of the parish. And the said bells to be so repaired by the said Thomas Milner, as is aforesaid, during the term and space of XX. yere, yff the said Thomas Milner do live so long, and continew within the parish of Wragble, the Churchwardens for the time being painge unto the said Thomas Milner VIIs. Vid. every year, that is to say IIIs. IIId. at Mychelmas and IIIs. IIId. at the Nunchiation of the blessed Virgin Mary by even portions.’

Churchwardens' accounts also contain some curious references to ringing. Thus, at Louth, Lincolnshire, we find the following :— ‘To william east for kuylling the bell in harvest for gathering of the pescodes IIId.’—the date of which is 1556. At Kirton-in-Lindsey we have, for 1581, ‘Item for mending the belles aganst Sant Hew day VIIIId.’ At Spalding there is the following :—‘1519 It'm pd. for rynging when the Tempest was, IIId.’ In Stamford there is the entry, ‘1608 Item paid for Rynging the vth of November VIId.’ and in another church of the same town we find, ‘1709 Pd. Richard Hambleton for ale for the Ringers on ye 29 May, VIIs.’

Many similar things might be quoted, but the repetition would become monotonous. The parish registers, and to some extent also the churchwardens' accounts, contain a mass of material which must be of lasting interest to all who rejoice to study the past, especially the past as it concerns our loved parish churches.

A. L. S.

Published: 10.xi.1899



The Chime of our Bells.

[This article has been contributed in the hope that, by the popularising of some of the traditions and history connected with church bells, a greater interest may be aroused among Church people in this branch of worship.—ED.]

WHEN the chimes of Advent are ringing in our ears, it is natural that our thoughts should turn to the bells whose music has so sacred a meaning. It was formerly the custom in some parishes for the bells to be rung every day during this season, usually in the evening; and this ringing was quite independent of any religious service. In fact, it prevailed during a time when daily services were by no means common. It was an expression of the belief, not yet extinct, that the ringing of bells is in itself a religious act, and an incentive to devotion. To regard the bells as merely intended to call folk to church, is a very narrow conception of their duty, according to old ideas. The simple utility may possibly have been their origin, though it is noticeable that the striking of gongs and kettles has formed a part of religious worship in the most barbarous ages and lands. Man has been prone to think that making a noise was an essential part of worship; and it is doubtless from this that the sweet and tunable bells have evolved. Their general peal during the small hours of Christmas morning was a beautiful manner of hailing the birth of the Infant Christ.

It is possible that the history of bell-ringing has been somewhat neglected. Few persons, if questioned, would be able to give any just idea of its antiquity amongst us. A majority would probably imagine that it came to Britain with the coming of Augustine—that epoch which, notable as it was, has been too much aggrandised as the dawn of our Christianity. Augustine did a great work, but fortunately, Christianity was here before him—and it was here in such healthy vigour that when the Saxons again turned Pagan, missionaries from North Britain and from Ireland were able to inaugurate a new and stronger growth of Christian life. The Celts had their bells as well as their faith. In Ireland they are supposed to be at least as old as St. Patrick; while in Wales we have a legend connecting a church bell with an early Bishop of Llandaff. These bells were of the roughest description, looking like clumsy hollow weights. St. Terman, an apostle of the Picts, contemporary with the great Palladius, is said to have been presented with a bell by the Pope when he paid a visit to Rome, which bell he neglected to carry with him, it being doubtless rather awkward to remove. Those who are acquainted with old legends of the saints, will not be surprised to learn that the bell miraculously followed Terman to Scotland, possibly causing him to feel ashamed of his neglect: and this very bell was preserved at Banchory-Ternan until the Reformation. The bell of Kentigern, better known as St. Mungo, still figures in the arms of Glasgow. St. Patrick is said to have scattered and banished the demons of Ireland by throwing his bell into their

midst; but it would appear that his expulsion of these evil spirits was less permanent than his reported expulsion of the snakes. With such stories attaching to them, the bells became much venerated among the Celtic peoples; and, for long centuries after these days, an oath taken on one of the ancient bells was esteemed more sacred than even one sworn on Holy Writ.

The bells of these legends appear to have been hand-bells, suitable for carrying with the missionary-saints in their travels; and we are given the very name of the attendant whose duty it was to carry St. Patrick's bell. So highly did the Celts, both of Scotland and Ireland, honour their bells, that they sometimes specially shrouded them—a practice said to be unknown in any other Church. In the Highlands may still be seen certain old quadrangular bells, sometimes lying in graveyards with no protection whatever to prevent their being stolen, yet sufficiently protected by the old superstitious regard. To some bells was ascribed the power of always returning to their right place, whether stolen away or honestly removed; the bell of St. Fillan, for example, possessed such traditional powers, but has damaged its reputation by lying for years in the National Museum of Antiquities at Edinburgh. It is interesting to notice that the use of hand-bells survived for a long time in the Church offices, as in visitations of the sick, funerals, and in processions, besides their use as sacring-bells. Both in the Saxon and the Celtic Churches it is evident that this form of movable bell was the earliest known; but bells soon took their permanent place in the churches that were built. So early as the time of Caedmon cast bells were hung in towers; and in 750 Egbert issued an order commanding 'every priest at the proper hour to sound the bells of his church, and then go through the sacred offices of God.' At Crowland Abbey there was a peal of seven bells, destroyed by fire in 1091; their names were Pega, Bega, Tatwin, Turketyl, Betelin, Guthlac, and Bartholomew—some of which sound like magic formulas, while others we recognise as good old Saxon names. After the destruction of these, a brass-worker of Boston presented two small bells to the Crowland monks.

When the consecration of bells took place, this was often done in the name of some special saint, and the ringing of the bell was a direct invocation of the saint's protection. Sometimes the bell was consecrated to Christ; a great number bore the name of the Virgin. But the earliest bells, both Celtic and Saxon, do not appear to have borne any inscriptions. In time of fire the bells were supposed to allay the flames, as they were also supposed to allay tempest.

Bells were rung on many more occasions, in the past, than they are now. There was not only the peal for Christmas morn, for in many parts of the country a special chime was given to harvest. As recently as last century, the bells at Barrow-on-Humber were rung during the weeks of harvest, both at early dawn and late in the evening; and a similar practice is continued at Driffield to this very day. It is a beautiful and poetic idea, whatever its direct utility may be, giving something of a religious consecration to the gathering in of the harvest. The bell that was formerly rung on Shrove Tuesday was given the popular name of Pancake Bell. At Kilton-in-Lindsey the bells are rung every Tuesday and Thursday during two of the winter months, and the origin of this is very interesting. Tuesday was the market-day of Gainsborough; Thursday was the market-day of Brigg. Those who attended these markets, when the country was unenclosed, had great trouble in finding their way back safely at night, and the bells were rung as a guide. This reminds us of the tradition current at Barton, Lincolnshire, where it is said that an old lady lost her way on the wolds, but was enabled to regain it by hearing the bells of St. Peter's Church. Full of gratitude, and eager to save others who might find themselves in a like predicament, she gave a piece of land to the parish clerk, on condition that he should ring one of the bells for an hour every night, except Sundays, during the winter season.

'Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark.'

The Curfew survived long after its special meaning was forgotten, and in some places is continued to this day. Where we find that the bell is only rung in the winter months, it has usually been endowed for the special purpose of guiding or warning travellers. At St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe, Kent, a shepherd who killed himself by a fall over the rocks, lived long enough to bequeath a piece of land, which became known as 'Curfew Land,' to endow the winter ringing of a curfew bell. Goethe tells us of a bell that followed a truant child into the fields and brought him back to church. There is indeed something personal, like the voice of a friend, in the sound of a beloved familiar bell. A. L. S.

Old Bell-Ringing Customs at Manchester Cathedral and Elsewhere.

THE ringing out of the old year and the ringing in of the new (says a correspondent to one of the Manchester newspapers) is a familiar and long-established custom which, happily, still survives. Old customs die hard, and yet the century upon the last year of which we have well advanced has dealt unkindly with many a time-honoured custom. The exigencies of modern life, especially in industrial communities, leave little room for sentiment. We are nothing nowadays if not practical. There was a time when nothing of note occurred in the town without an accompaniment in the belfry, when bells had a voice in national affairs as well as in matters ecclesiastical. It will surprise many to learn that as recently as the early years of the present century, in addition to the forenoon and afternoon daily-prayer bells still to be heard above din and traffic, a bell sounded daily in the old church tower at six and at eight o'clock in the morning, at one o'clock, and at eight o'clock in the evening. This list, which takes no account of the frequent ringings for other purposes, is sufficient to show what a complete change has come over our town life in a comparatively short period. A blessed change, some will say. And yet it may be doubted, even by those of less romantic mind than the immortal author of 'Those evening bells,' whether the change is one of unmingled blessing.

November 5th commemorated the discovery of Gunpowder Plot, 1605, and no event was more widely celebrated in the belfries than this. At St. Margaret's, Westminster, a peal of thanksgiving was immediately rung, as the following extract relating to the same year testifies:—

'Paid the ringers at the time when the Parliament
House should have been blown up x shillings.'

Seven bells bear inscriptions relating to this event; for example, the second bell at Owmbly, Lincolnshire: 'Let us remember the 5 of November.' The discontinuance of this widespread custom is, doubtless, due in great measure to the feeling which eventually led to the petition of Convocation and of Parliament for the abolition

of the special service for 'Gunpowder Plot' in 1859. A curious indication of the existence of a milder temper with regard to these belfry rejoicings occurs in the following inscription on a bell at Witham-on-the-Hill, Lincolnshire, cast in the year 1831:—

'Twas not to prosper pride or hate
William Augustus Johnson gave me;
But peace and joy to celebrate,
And call to prayer to Heav'n to save ye.
Then keep the terms, and e'er remember,
May 29th ye must not ring;
Nor yet the 5th of each November,
Nor on the crowning of a king.'

January 30th, 1649, was the day when Charles I. was executed, and the church books of Colne show that the day was duly kept there: '1710. Paid for ringing on ye martyrdome of King Charles, 00/. 01s. 00d.' The bells had a prominent part in national rejoicings, especially when victory attended our arms and peace succeeded war.

Turning from gay to grave, one of the earliest references to the Manchester bells occurs in connexion with the funeral of William Trafford, of Garret Hall, Manchester, gentleman, in 1545. He directed by will that

'immediately after his death the great bell should be rung; that so soon as his body sets forward towards the church the great bell should begin to ring, and continue ringing until evening; and that no other bell should be rung for him on the day of his burial but the great bell.'—(*Chetham Soc.*, vol. cvii. p. 8, note.)

These specific directions seem to contain an allusion to prevalent irregularities at the period. On the one hand, old superstitions continued to attach to the use of bells at a death, and, on the other hand, there were abuses connected with the fees charged for death peals or 'obits.' Oftentimes the clerks for private gain presumed upon the ignorance of the poor or on the opulence of the wealthier classes. The 'Advertisements for due order,' &c., of VII. Elizabeth set forth the following use:—

'That where anye Christian bodie is in passing, that the bell be tolled, and that the Curate be specially called for to comforte the sicke person; and after the time of his passing to ringe no more but one shorte peale, and one before the burial, and another shorte peale after the burial.'

It will be observed that William Trafford's directions tended to the simplicity and economy which most befit Christian burial.

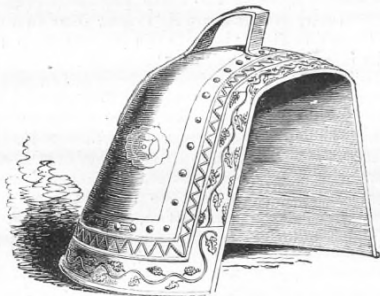
Published: 24.viii.1900

Illustrated Church Notes.

VII.—THE CURFEW BELL.

AMONG the customs of this country which link the past with the present, is the ringing of the curfew bell. Few subjects have given rise to more discussion than the curfew laws. It is a debated point, whether the first Norman king introduced the curfew usages, or put into force an old institution of the country for the protection of houses against fire, and not a repressive measure, to prevent, as is often stated, seditious meetings of the turbulent Saxons. Says the poet Thomson :—

'The shivering wretches, at the curfew sound,
Dejected sunk into their sordid beds,
And, through the mournful gloom of ancient times
Muss'd sad, or drempt of better.



COUVER-FEU.

The word *curfew* is derived from the old French *carre-feu* or *cerre-feu*, which afterwards became *couvre-feu*, and lastly *curfew*. Each of these terms, meaning to cover fire, indicates the intention; and there was a utensil known as the *couvre-feu*, a kind of metal cover, somewhat resembling a shield in form, the use of which was to be thrust over the fire when the bell rang. This probably would only be found in the houses of the wealthy.

It is certain, under various designations, from or before the days of Alfred the Great, or long Saxon and Danish lines of monarchs, down to the Norman conquest, that the curfew custom was kept up with more or less laxity as a national observance.

When the Conqueror came, and after that sanguinary struggle, which had to roughly pave the way for England's advancement, he set himself the task of governing the people he had overcome. Whether he found the law of the curfew still feebly kept up, or whether it had died out, we cannot tell, but we know that two years after the battle of Hastings—in 1068—he ordered fires to be covered at the ringing of an eight o'clock bell, and the people to retire to rest. He had probably been accustomed to a similar regulation in Normandy; and it is evident the enactment, however more severely enforced than the Saxons had previously experienced, could not have been purposed as a suspicious and contemptuous safeguard against them, for the haughty robbers called nobles were as subject to the curfew as the meanest swineherds they owned. There seems to have been, from an indefinitely early period, a religious service at eight in the evening. When William, after the injuries received by the plunging of his horse as it trod upon hot ashes, lay dying, the vesper bell of a neighbouring church aroused him from the stupor which had gathered round his sinking mind. He asked if he were in England, and if that were the curfew ringing, and on being told he was in 'his own Normandy,' and the bell was for evening prayer, he 'charged them bid the monks pray for his soul, and remained a while dull and heavy.' Polydore-Vergil tells us that William, to convert the native ferocity of the people to indolence, ordained that the head of each family should retire to rest at eight in the evening, 'having raked the ashes over the fire; and for this purpose a sign should be made through every village, which is even now preserved, and called in the Norman *couver-feu*.'

Hutchinson, the learned historian, in his 'History of Durham,' speaks with great bitterness of this custom, saying William, 'under severe penalties, prohibited the use of fire or candles when the curfew bell should ring, to prevent associations and conspiracies. This bell was heard by the English as the knell of their departed liberty, and a repeated testimony of slavery.' Other Englishmen have written in a similar manner.

Voltaire, in his *Universal History*, ridicules the notion of the curfew being a badge of degradation. He observes that 'The law, far from being tyrannical, was only an ancient police, established in almost all the towns in the north, and which had long been preserved in the convents. He further adds the reason for it: 'That the houses were all built of wood, and the fear of fire was one of the most important objects of general police.'

Throughout the reigns of William I. and his son, William II., the curfew law was rigidly enforced, and, however good its intentions were, the rigour of its administration rendered it increasingly obnoxious. The politic Henry I. in 1103 wisely repealed the enactment, modifying the law, which, however, not compulsory, 'settled into a cherished custom.'

Many laws have been passed in this country to prevent persons wandering about at night. At Tamworth, for example, in 1390, a

bylaw was made, and 'it provided no man, woman, or servant should go out after the ringing of the curfew from one place to another unless they had a light in their hands, under pain of imprisonment.' For a long period it was the signal for closing public-houses. Old churchwardens' accounts and other publications contain many references to this subject. We find in the accounts of Kingston-on-Thames :—

1651. For ringing the curfew-bell for one year .. £1 10 0

We have for a long time been collecting materials for a monograph on the curfew-bell, and particulars of where it is still rung, and where information on the subject may be found, will be welcomed if addressed to Mr. William Andrews, Church Bells Office, Cecil Court, London.

The latest instance of this custom occurs in the United States. It was recorded in the English newspapers in December, 1895, that the town of Peebles, Ohio, had passed an ordinance requiring a curfew-bell to be rung at eight p.m. every evening except Sunday. When it rang, every boy between the ages of six and eighteen, and every girl between the ages of six and sixteen, unless accompanied by parents or guardians, had to be within doors, under penalty of arrest, and a fine of not less than one dollar and costs.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Published: 3.v.1901

The Bells of East Bergholt.

SIR,—In enclosing a report of the service announced in your columns last week, I would remark that, for a country village, we have done our part pretty well in raising over 100*l.* for our bells, and for the repair of the unique cage in which they hang. Will not the lovers of CHURCH BELLS assist us in raising the 15*l.* or 20*l.* which still remain necessary for the repair of the unique bell-cage beneath which bells so uniquely rung are sheltered. I shall be pleased to hand over to the Churchwardens any contributions which may be sent.

J. J. LIAS.

Published: 19.vii.1901

THE BELL OF ST. FILLAN.

THE story of St. Fillan's bell forms a strange chapter in folk-lore of Scotland. This bell is oblong in shape, and about twelve inches high. In the olden times it was customary to place it on a gravestone in the churchyard of Strathfillan, Perthshire. It used to be brought into requisition to cure persons suffering from mental disorders, and believed to be efficacious. The patient was first dipped with much ceremony in the Saint's Pool. The bell was then placed in the chapel, tied with ropes, and there remained all night. Next day the ceremony was concluded by the bell being placed, with great solemnity, on the head of the lunatic.

It was the popular belief, that, if stolen, the bell would rescue itself from the thief, and return home ringing on its route! In course of



THE BELL OF ST. FILLAN.

time its superstitious use was stopped by the Church authorities, and it was placed under lock and key. Some years since it found a resting-place in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, at Edinburgh. An interesting description of it appears in the catalogue, and is as follows: 'The Bell of St. Fillan, of cast bronze, square-shaped, and with double-headed dragon-like handle. It lay on a gravestone in the old churchyard at Strathfillan, Perthshire, where it was superstitiously used for the cure of insanity and other diseases till 1798, when it was removed by a traveller to England. It was returned to Scotland in 1869, and deposited in the Museum by Lord Crawford and the Bishop of Brechin, with the consent of the Heritors and Kirk Session of St. Fillan.'

The bell of St. Mura used to be credited with wonderful healing power, and connected with it is a good deal of Irish legendary lore. A very fine illustration of it finds a place as the frontispiece of *A Book about Bells*, by the Rev. G. S. Tyack, published by Mr. Elliot Stock.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Published: 26.vii.1901

The Bell of St. Fillan.

SIR,—You gave an account of the Bell of St. Fillan in your issue of July 26th. There is a great country house within a hundred miles of London, where that bell was to be seen from the time it was brought from Scotland, until 1869.

It was placed in the Hall, talked about by every one, used in chorales by myself and others, an old bronze cracked bell. It used to be said that its harsh sound would kill or cure any lunatic.

The history of its existence in this country house was that an ancestor of the present proprietor, in a mad freak, took it by night from Strathfillan, determined to prove by experience if the old legend was true that, if taken from the place, it was sure to return.

His diary gives this reason: In this house the bell remained for long years; and, in my recollection, the owner used to say that his wish was to travel to Strathfillan, go at night to the churchyard, ring the bell loudly, and quickly leave the place, placing the old bell on a tombstone. However, he never did this, but allowed it to leave England.

Unfortunately, by a misunderstanding, it reached the museum in Edinburgh, and not the old churchyard—a misunderstanding for which Lord Crawford and the Bishop of Brechin were not responsible.

I visited the Museum in Edinburgh, saw the old bell, and regretted that it was there, and not in the old churchyard as my friend intended it should at last be, to the fulfilment of the old legend, and as an expiation of his ancestor's freak.

'M.'

Published: 2.viii.1901

JACK THE BELLMAN.

JACK THE BELLMAN of Southwold has a fame extending far beyond the borders of Suffolk. These figures appear to have been more common in the past than is generally supposed from the few that remain at the present day. In the olden time they occupied an exalted position in the towers of the church, but now they are removed from their original positions, and few like Jack the Bellman of Southwold serve a useful purpose.

Jack of Southwold used to proclaim the hours from the old church tower, and in his palmy days must have cut a fine figure. Mr. H. Syer Cuming, the well-known antiquary, has given this figure careful consideration, and he tells us it is a carved and painted effigy of wood, standing on a hillock within a semicircular-topped recess, harnessed from head to heel in russet and gold armour, of the fashion of the commencement of the sixteenth century. The lower part of the basement is surrounded by gilded knots; the tassels fall a little below the hips, and the genouillères are of a somewhat rhombic contour. In his left hand is a scimitar, in the right a battle-axe, with the butt or hammer of which the bell was sounded, the bell depending from a branch which curves forward on the right of the figure. Some years since, it was removed from the tower to the vestry window open to the church, and the parish clerk makes Jack toll the bell as the clergyman leaves the vestry, and as a signal of the commencement of Divine service.

Our illustration is from a recent photograph kindly placed at our disposal by Mr. J. Martyn, of Southwold.

A Jack similar to the one at Southwold used to do duty at Blythburgh Church in the same county. A flowing beard gave it a venerable appearance.

In the West of England, as well as in the Eastern counties, in bygone times, some interesting Jacks used to be in active operation.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.



JACK THE BELLMAN OF SOUTHWOLD.

Published: 9.viii.1901

ON Tuesday the Bishop of London visited Sunbury, and dedicated the new peal of bells at the parish church. They are a present to the parish from Sir F. Dixon-Hartland, M.P., and Lady Dixon-Hartland, as a memorial to the late Queen Victoria. It was necessary to reconstruct the belfry to hang the bells, and the cost of this has been defrayed by public subscription.

Published: 18.x.1901

CONDUCTORS are requested to send matter for publication in the Bell-ringing column to THE EDITOR, 'CHURCH BELLS' OFFICE, 3 and 5 Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C.

Published: 20.xii.1901

The Brighton Church Congress.

SIR,—As a bell-ringer who has read your paper for many years I am surprised that the writer of the article under the above heading (p. 751) has not drawn attention to the fact that 'the Exercise' has this year received the attention of the Subjects Committee, who have, I believe for the first time, admitted 'Bells, Belfries, and Bell-ringers,' into the programme, and have been fortunate in securing the President of the Central Council of Ringers—Sir A. P. Heywood—to read a paper on a subject which has hitherto not received the attention it deserves.

'Church Music' has on previous occasions been discussed. It is surely a welcome novelty that at Brighton the 'ringers' are to have their long-looked-for turn. 'Belfry reform' has been quietly progressing thanks to the many Diocesan and County Associations; the recognition of ringing as Church work at the Congress should bring it into greater prominence.

A RINGING PARSON.

Market Harborough, August 16, 1901.

Published: 23.viii.1901

The Church Congress and Bell-ringing.

SIR,—Your correspondent, 'A Ringing Parson,' is incorrect in saying that 'Bells and Bell-ringing' has been introduced for the first time this year into the programme of a Church Congress. I myself wrote a paper for the Plymouth Church Congress many years ago on the subject, which formed the text of an amusing leader in the *Daily Telegraph* at the time.

AN OLDER RINGING PARSON.

Published: 30.viii.1901

Sectional Meetings.

IN THE ROYAL PAVILION, ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2ND.

2.30 to 5	THE ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION OF CLERICAL INCOMES.	Rev. T. W. Belcher. E. W. Petersen, Esq.
8 to 10	BELLS, BELFRIES, AND BELL-RINGERS.	Sir A. P. Heywood. Rev. C. D. P. Davies.

Published: 27.ix.1901

Another interesting meeting was one held in the music room of the Pavilion on the subject of 'Bells, Belfries, and Bell-ringers.' Archdeacon Mount presided, and I am sorry to say there was not a very large attendance. The first paper was read by Sir A. P. Heywood, Bart., who pointed out that ringing was exclusively an English accomplishment, so that England had become to be known as the 'ringing isle,' and the ringing of bells had become associated with many of our joys and sorrows. He finally urged that, by taking a real interest in them, the clergy might constitute bell-ringing into a valuable factor in strengthening regard for the Church among the masses. The Rev. C. D. P. Davies's paper was written with a view to showing that ringing and ringers were worthy of hearty recognition and encouragement on the part of the Church at large, and that the Church was likely to be a gainer by holding out to ringers the hand of fellowship. Much interest was shown in the papers.

Published: 11.x.1901



SIR A. P. HEYWOOD, BART.

SIR ARTHUR PERCIVAL HEYWOOD succeeded his father in the baronetcy four years ago. He is fifty-two years of age, but looks ten years younger. He married a daughter of Dr. Sumner, Bishop of Guildford, by whom he has a large family. Sir Arthur is one of the most enthusiastic of bell-ringers, and is, perhaps, one of the greatest living authorities on the science of bell-ringing. There may possibly be some occult connection between this fact and the family motto on his coat of arms, *Altè volo*, 'I fly high.'

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Belfry Rules.

SIR,—Among the most interesting old rules I know are those, in the ancient church of St. Mary Magdalene, at Brushford, a hamlet, situated upon the main road from Minehead to Exeter, and through which the meandering river Exe traverses. The worthy Rector, who has occupied the post well nigh fifty years, is the Rev. Charles St. Barbe Sydenham, M.A., a representative of two of the oldest families in Somersetshire. The Belfry Rules there are dated A.D. 1803, and read as follows:

Let awful silence first proclaimed be,
Next, let us praise the Holy Trinity;
Then homage pay unto our valiant King,
And with a blessing raise this pleasant ring.
Hark! how the chirping Treble sings it clear,
And covering Tom comes rolling in the rear;
Now up and set, let us consult and see,
What laws are best to keep sobriety,
Then all consult to make this joint decree,
Let him who swears, or in an angry mood
Quarrels, or strikes, altho' he draws no blood,
Or wears his hat, or spurs, or turns a Bell,
Or by unskilful handling mars a peal,
Pay down his sixpence for each separate crime,
(This caution shall not be effaced by time.)
But if the Sexton's these defaults should be,
From him demand a double penalty.
Whoever does our Pastor disrespect,
Or Warden's order wilfully neglect,
By one and all be held in foul disgrace,
And ever banished this harmonious place.
Now round let's go, with pleasure to the ear,
And pierce with pleasing sound the yielding air,
And when the Bells are up then let us sing,
God save the Church and bless great George, our King.
Fair Park, Exeter. HARRY HEMS.

Published: 3.iv.1903

Belfry Rules.

SIR,—Considering the number of churches in England where a reprint of the verses quoted by Mr. Harry Hems, in a recent letter to *CHURCH BELLS*, might be of great use in contributing to good order and Churchmanship in the belfries, would it be too much to ask if you could see your way to reprint the verses on cards for sale and distribution. M. P.

[The verses mentioned by our esteemed correspondent appeared in the issue of *CHURCH BELLS* for April 3rd. We should be glad to know what our readers think of the proposal.—Ed. "C. B."]

Published: 17.iv.1903

A member of the congregation of St. Matthew's, Dunedin, made an offer of 100l. towards a peal of bells on condition that the rest was subscribed. The Rev. W. Curzon-Siggers on February 4th mentioned the matter to the congregation, and asked for a suitable response. Such general interest was excited in the matter that within a month the whole sum required was raised, and an order cabled to Messrs. Harrington for a complete set of thirteen of their largest and best tubular bells.

Published: 5.v.1906

LADY BELL RINGERS.

Among the many pursuits taken up by ladies, that of bell-ringing is, perhaps, one of the most unusual, and deserves greater popularity. One of the first bands of lady bell-ringers was founded at St. Patrick's Church, Coleraine, Ireland, and this successful team was formed in 1898 by Miss K. Given, who has captained it since then. The eight bells at St. Patrick's weigh from 5 to 20 cwt. each, and of these the first six are rung by ladies. For the two heaviest they have to call in the assistance of men bell-ringers for the peal; though these two bells have actually been rung by ladies. To the ladies' team is allotted every third week, from Monday until the following Sunday evening, and during that time their captain is responsible for all ringing. The bell-ringers are very keen about their work, and many of them have proved themselves very efficient.



GROUP OF LADY BELL-RINGERS.

In many country districts where difficulty is experienced in obtaining a sufficient number of ringers, ladies would find in bell-ringing a very interesting and useful occupation.

It may be added that the lady bell-ringers began to practise on the bells in 1898, that being the year in which the Rev. Freeman Dudley, M.A., became Rector of Coleraine. At first they had two lessons a week, and were able to ring their first peal after being under instruction for a month. They rang a peal on the occasion of the visit of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland and Lady Dudley to Coleraine in November, 1902.

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